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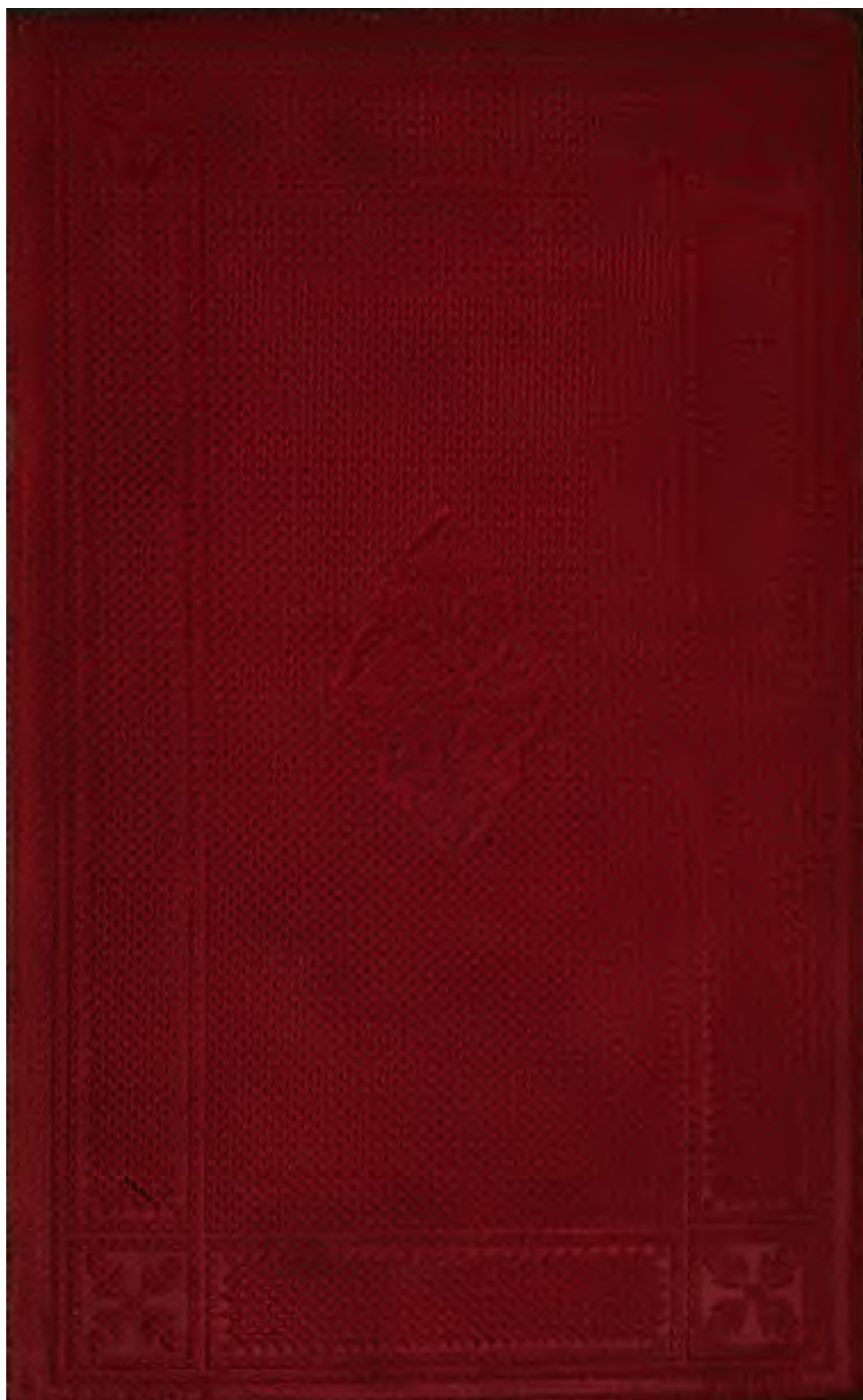
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PERILS AND PANICS
OF INVASION,

IN

1796-7-8, 1804-5,

AND

AT THE PRESENT TIME.

BY

HUMPHREY BLUNT.

LONDON:

THOMAS CAUTLEY NEWBY,
30, WELBECK STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE.

1860.

226. b. 2.



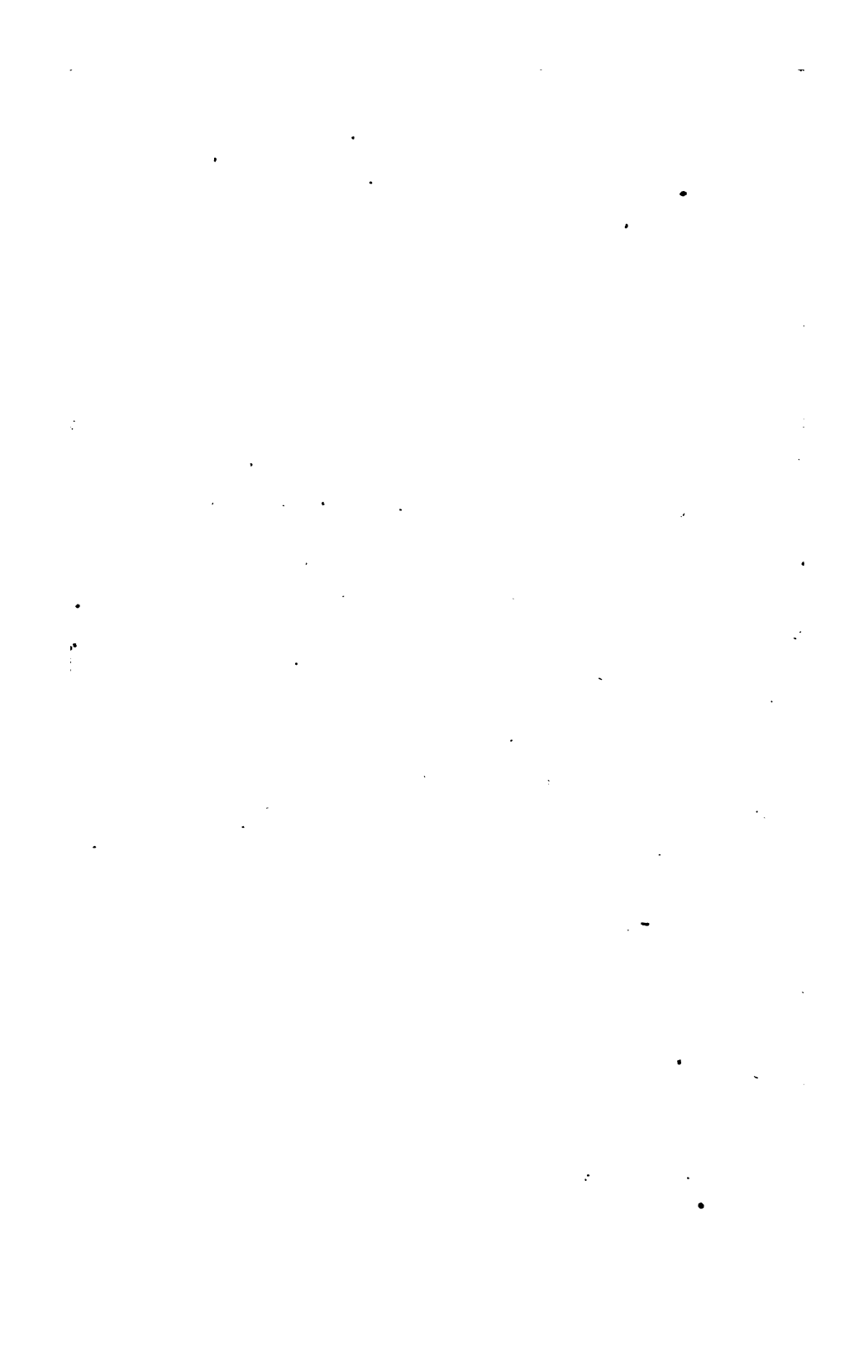
TO THE
OFFICERS AND PRIVATES OF THE VOLUNTEER
SERVICE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM,

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED,

IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE NATIONAL ARDOUR
AND PATRIOTIC SPIRIT WHICH ANIMATED
THEIR PREDECESSORS

BEING CONTINUED IN THEM,

BY THE AUTHOR.





PREFACE.

IN presenting this volume to the reading public the writer is desirous of explaining, in order to account for what may appear to be many striking omissions, that he does not design to give even a summary account of the great events of Europe during the period embraced by the following pages, further than as they are connected with the former perils of this nation ; or give a more definite form to those which would appear to threaten her in our own time. The history of the past would be of more curiosity than value if it did not enable us to read the present more accurately, or penetrate the future with a prescience beyond mere conjecture.

By the title page, it will be seen that this work has reference only to the invasions and projected invasions since 1796. Full of national interest and instructive teaching as the former attempts on this country, from the time of the Norman Conquest to that of the successful occupation by the Prince of Orange are, they could not be included in the limits of a single volume, without considerable deductions from more recent and (it is trusted) more interesting materials.

There is another circumstance which has materially influenced the author's plan, and that is the admirable manner in which the earlier invasions have been treated by Professor CREASY in his "Invasions and Projected Invasions of England from the Saxon Times." Had that spirited narrative comprised some of the minor attempts on this country (especially the descent on the Welsh coast in 1797, and on the Irish in 1798) and which were probably, only omitted as being too unimportant to be worthy of such a record, it is probable that the pages now

before the reader would never have met his eye.

In bringing together the exciting causes which led to the formation of the Volunteer Corps at the latter end of the last and the first few years of the present century—and which have not, to his knowledge, met with even so humble a chronicler as himself—when our fathers and grandfathers—whether in the person of the King's son or the humble peasant—rallied round the standard of their Sovereign in defence of his throne, and the institutions of their country, the author owns to a still stronger and more individual feeling. He would wish to see the spirit of his country again kindled, not by the immediate apprehension of a renewed alarm, and which would be quenched as soon as the danger subsided, but by a calm and steady conviction, that England can and WILL be sufficiently protected, not by hordes of hired legions, sapping the very vitals of her internal strength, but by the voluntary and unbought services of her own

sons, on her own shores; in a word, his object is to render what little power he possesses in making the VOLUNTEER RIFLE CORPS a *permanent* institution of this country.

3A, Upper Westbourne Terrace,
12th March, 1860.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

General State of Europe at the end of 1796—Internal condition of England—Financial Depression—Suspension of Cash Payments—Disaffection in the Navy—Ireland “an Enemy’s Country”—Successes of the French Republic—“Army of England”—Instructions to Bonaparte—Descents on our coasts; at Brighton, Isle of Wight, by Commodore Thurot in 1760, Hoche in 1790, Humbert off Fishguard in 1798, and Napoleon (threatened) in 1805—Analogy of the Present Times with the Past.

p. 1

CHAPTER II.

Projected Invasion of the English Coast at Fellingham Marshes—Marquis Cornwallis prepares—State of Ireland at this period—Causes of disaffection—Progress of the Rebellion—“The United Irishmen”—Spread of the Society—Its Alliance with the French Government—Lawless State of the Country—Narrative of Hoche’s attempted Invasion of Ireland in 1796—Extent of the Armament—Confidence of Napoleon and Hoche of its

Success—The Expedition baffled by the weather and becomes divided—Arrival at Bantry Bay of part—Rising of the Country—Return to Port—Disastrous Results of the Armament—Lord Cornwallis' Despatch—Loyalty of the Irish People—Dublin Volunteers and Yeomanry—Debates in Parliament—Naval mismanagement—The Ministry severely attacked—Mr. Whitbread—Mr. Dundas—Mr. Pitt—Lord Grenville—Marquis of Lansdowne—Reflections p. 22

CHAPTER III.

Continued preparations for Invasion by the French, Dutch, and Spanish Powers—Inducements held out by the French press, the inflammatory proclamation to attack England—Extensive preparations at Brest—Descent on the Welsh Coast in February, 1797—Landing effected at Ilfracombe—Driven off by the North Devon Volunteers—Arrival at Fishguard—Different versions of the attack—Official account from the London Gazette and Dispatches—Defenceless state of the Welsh Coasts—Capabilities of Milford Haven, and Mr. Page's plan for its improvement and protection p. 46

CHAPTER IV.

Operations of the English in the West Indies—Attack and Surrender of Trinidad—Glorious engagement off Cape St. Vincent—Effect of the Victory—Dutch preparations against England—Battle of Camperdown—Signal Defeat of the Dutch—Rejoicings of the English people—The French Directory continues its Designs against us—Command of the

Expedition given to Napoleon—His buccaneering style of Address	p. 75
--	-------

CHAPTER V.

Formidable Position of France in 1798—Political Changes in Europe—Switzerland subdued—Subjugation of Spain—Annexation of the Low Countries—French successes in Austria and the Italian States—Similarity of the former with the present state of Europe—The Invasion of England is again revived—The French people instigated in every way against us—Infamous Calumnies spread abroad—The Marquis Cornwallis' apprehensions—Essex in a state of danger—The Progress and Suppression of the Irish Rebellion—Arrival of a French Force at Killala Bay under General Humbert—Defeat of the English under General Lake—Version of the affair from the Marquis Cornwallis' Despatches
p. 83

CHAPTER VI.

English apprehensions of Invasion—Extensive preparations against it—The design abandoned, and the Expedition to Egypt substituted—Sails from Toulon—Splendour of the Armament—Its understood object—Napoleon's address to the Army—Malta taken—The English Fleet under Nelson—Battle of the Nile—Expedition to Syria—Capitulation of El-Arish—Atrocious massacre of the garrison of Jaffa—Message to Ghezzar Bashaw and his noble answer—The siege of Acre—Overthrow of Napoleon's mighty design—Return to France—Made First Consul—Makes overtures of peace to England—Again prepares for invasion—England adopts

vigorous means of defence—Becomes offensive in its operation—Nelson sails from Deal—Arrives off and attacks Boulogne—Negotiations for Peace—Peace of Amiens p. 110

CHAPTER VII.

Termination of the Peace—King's message to Parliament—Extraordinary impression produced by it, and extensive preparations—Napoleon assumes the title of Emperor—His hypocritical profession of Peace—His letter to George III. and Answer—Necessity of conquest by Napoleon—Position of the French Empire—Increase of the English Navy—Napoleon's plan of Invasion by the Flotilla, and the extent of the equipment—Magnificent measures taken by England for defence—Great improvement in the Naval administration—Napoleon's attention to petty details—Causes of his success—Announcement of distribution of decorations at Boulogne—Extraordinary omens—Dramatic effect of Napoleon's pageant—The grand display on the 3rd of August—Miserable disappointment of the Troops—Napoleon's object disclosed p. 136

CHAPTER VIII.

Napoleon renounces his intention for a time of invading England—Nelson's sagacity in detecting Napoleon's design—His celebrated Dispatch—Relative strength of the French and English Fleets—Admiral Collingwood's penetration—Prompt arrival of the "Curieux"—Consequences arising from its celerity—Admiral Stirling's junction of force with Sir Robert Calder—Important engagement off Cape Finisterre—Important results of the victory—

Rage of Napoleon—Abandonment of the intended Invasion, and recall of "The Army of England"—National ingratitude towards Sir Robert Calder; his trial and sentence—Different opinions as to Napoleon's being sincere in his intended attack on England—What his avowed intentions were in the anticipated conquest—Probable consequence of a successful attack—Conduct of French invading armies—Fearful outrages in Egypt and Algeria—Napoleon ascribes his defeat to the elements—Opinions of Thiers, "The Quarterly Review," and Sir Walter Scott as to the probability of success
p. 178

CHAPTER IX.

Means taken by England for its defence—Embargo on French vessels—Seizure of English persons in retaliation—Defensive preparations—Military strength of England—*The levy en masse*—The nation becomes a camp—The King places himself at the head of his troops, and the Prince of Wales solicits being placed in active service—National spirit displayed—Magnificent attitude of England—Universal feeling of patriotism—Naval preparations—Corresponding menaces on the part of the French—Admirable organization of their invading army—Meeting of the City of London—Admirable feelings excited by the Invasion—"The General Fast"—The Volunteers reviewed in Hyde Park by the King in person—Presentation of colours by the Prince of Wales—Presentation of colours to the Queen's Royal Volunteers by the Countess of Harrington—Presentation by the Lord Mayor of the colours to the Loyal London Volunteers—Estimation of the Volunteers at that period . . . p. 222

CHAPTER X.

Rise and Progress of Steam as a power of War—Allusion to it by Earl Stanhope in 1808—Fulton's proposal to Napoleon—Alison's remarks on it—Invention of "the Screw" propellor—Its superiority over the Paddle for maritime warfare—Ingratitude to Smith the inventor—Importance of Steam in the security of the country—Prince de Joinville's opinion—Thiers—Lamarche—Daru—The Duke of Wellington on our "Defences"—Admiral Bowles—The Earl of Ellesmere—Sir Francis B. Head—"An Officer of experience".—Admiral Sir C. Napier—Sir Howard Douglas—The Quarterly Review—The Edinburgh Review—Present strength of the English Navy p. 272

CHAPTER XI.

Government measures and Parliamentary proceedings on the formation of the Volunteer Corps, 1798-1804—Agitation of the public mind on the renewal of hostilities in 1803—Debates on the King's Message—Debate on Bill for raising a reserved Force—The celebrated measure for raising a levy *en masse*, and spirited debate—The thanks of the House of Commons voted to the Volunteers—Army estimate for the year 1804—Animated debates—Patriotic spirit evinced on both sides of the House . . . p. 311

CHAPTER XII.

Perils and panic-mongers—General Sir C. Napier's opinion—England ought to be at the mercy of no

foreign power—French designs obvious—Being prepared is being secured—Cornhill Magazine on "Invasion Panics"—England *not* panic struck, but to a great extent undefended in a military point of view—Opinion of the Duke of Wellington of the effect of a contest with France—Necessity of the French Emperor to be at war with somebody—The army to him like the monster of Frankenstein—The Emperor a slave to his own slaves—Hostility of England in Charles X., Louis Philippe, and the Republic times—Prodigious advance of the French Naval Marine—Cherbourg—Popularity in France of a war with England—Sir Howard Douglas quoted—Mr. Roebuck—English and French naval strength compared—Present causes exist for national uneasiness—Enormous military force of the French—Mr. Kinglake's question and Lord J. Russell's answer—Extract from the Emperor's Speech to the French Chamber, 1857—English Army and Navy Estimates for 1860 . p. 347

CHAPTER XIII.

Cause of disproportion between British and Foreign military forces—England has no conscription—She must keep pace with her neighbours—Peace best preserved by being prepared for war—Volunteer Corps indispensable in the absence of large standing forces—Regular troops mercenary ones—"The Cornhill Magazine" and the Rifle Corps—Garibaldi's vindication of the Volunteers—Is the discipline of the Regular force an advantage to them?—Napoleon's confidence in the National Guards—Testimony of the efficiency of the Volunteers in former days—A French witness called in corroboration—We must pay for our protection—Increase of the

Navy and Army Estimates, and what we have got by it—Obligatory in all ranks to unite for the common safety—Every man liable to be called upon—Impolicy of breaking up the former Volunteer Corps—Public Schools and their sports—Robert Hall's eloquent address to the Volunteers—The end p. 384

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General State of Europe at the end of 1796—Internal condition of England—Financial Depression—Suspension of Cash Payments—Disaffection in the Navy—Ireland “an Enemy’s Country”—Successes of the French Republic—“Army of England”—Instructions to Bonaparte—Descents on our coasts; at Brighton, Isle of Wight, by Commodore Thurot in 1760, Hoche in 1790, Humbert off Fishguard in 1798, and Napoleon (threatened) in 1805—Analogy of the Present Times with the Past.

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integrity of England as a nation had been attempted to be violated by an invasion that had just appeared on the shores of the sister island, but to use the beautiful words of Curran, "she trembled on the pivot of her destiny." Perils of fearful magnitude threatened her in all quarters; "we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears." The political balance of Europe was shaken to its very centre, and England stood almost alone, and unsupported in the "fiery furnace" in which, with barely an exception, every continental state was plunged.

The rapid progress of the French Republic, and the magnificent success of its arms under the first Napoleon had gradually extinguished the liberties of Europe. The Italian States, besides losing the greater part of their territory, were paralyzed with terror. Belgium was subdued; Holland was virtually incorporated with the conquering Republic; and the subjugation of the free towns of Germany and Switzerland was

either completed, or they were severally marked out for destruction. England, however, stood erect; as yet she had not been brought into violent collision with her victorious neighbour; yet it was evident that the period had arrived, when she would be brought into the field of action—not merely in self-defence, but to fight for her actual existence as a nation.

Every meaner foe had now succumbed to the power that was, under the pretence of emancipation and regeneration, laying prostrate continental freedom. The allies with whom England had hitherto acted, and in whose defence she had struggled, were either arrayed under the banners of her enemy or too far subdued to render her any aid in return.

After a desperate resistance in Italy, Austria was preparing for her last stand on the barriers of the Alps; Spain had recently joined her forces to those of the French Republic; “the whole Continent from the Texel to Gibraltar was arrayed against Great Bri-

tain.”* Whatever might have been the maritime superiority she still possessed, she had only narrowly escaped from invasion, and with it from the desolating consequences of a civil war, by the uncertain aid of the elements.

Thus she stood alone, in the eastern hemisphere, in the possession of equal laws and a free constitution, and they were the priceless treasures which rendered her most obnoxious to her foe. Freedom, hunted from every other corner of Europe, sought for an asylum on her hospitable but troubled shores,—and by affording that asylum she raised the implacable resentment, and excited the vindictiveness of all who were opposed to Liberty,—and their name was Legion !

And what was her internal condition ? “Difficulty crowded on difficulty, danger on danger.”† The return of Lord Malmesbury from Paris at the close of the year, after an

* Sir Archibald Alison’s History of Europe, vol. v. p. 819.

† Annual Register (for 1797), p. 148.

unsuccessful negotiation, had closed every hope of putting an end to a long and exhausting war, and which had tried her resources to the uttermost. The financial pressure was severe in the extreme. Consols which shortly before the commencement of the continental war stood at 98, in January 1797 were at $56\frac{1}{2}$, and in September in that year had dwindled down to $47\frac{7}{8}$. Precious metals were scarcely visible in our currency; the exigencies of our own commerce, and the subsidies to foreign nations had drained off nearly all our coin.

The pressure arising from these united causes was felt during the whole of 1795 and 1796, and at the time we are speaking of—the close of the latter year—the dread of invasion urged all classes to convert their paper money into gold, and a run upon the country banks was the inevitable consequence. The Bank of England then had to undergo a similar strain on its resources, by applications from all quarters for assistance; and the panic seized the Metropolis, and “a run for

gold" was the result. In the latter end of February the Bank was on the verge of insolvency, and reduced, in order to gain time, to the miserable expedient of paying in sixpences.

Before, however, the Bank was compelled to close its doors, the Government stepped forward to its rescue. On the 26th of February, 1797, an order of the Privy Council was issued by which it was permitted to refrain from "issuing any cash in payment till the sense of Parliament could be taken on the subject; and the proper measures adopted thereupon for maintaining the means of circulation and supporting the public credit of the kingdom in this important conjuncture."*

Our Navy, our sheet anchor in a great national crisis, was fast drifting into mutiny; and the red flag of rebellion was about to be hoisted on the mast-heads of our "wooden walls," which we had hitherto regarded as our Palladiums in the hour of danger. In-

* Annual Register for 1797, p. 181.

stead of loyal and well-affected defenders of their country, they were turned into the prisons of their commanders, and placed under the command of rebel leaders. In May, 1797, the fleet at the Nore broke out into open mutiny. The ships drew themselves up in order of battle across the mouth of the Thames, so that no vessel could pass either up or down the river; the mutineers constituted themselves "a Floating Republic," and appointed one of their own class, a common seaman of the name of Parker, their "President," and which office he fulfilled with undaunted resolution, and no small share of ability.

"At intelligence of this alarming insurrection, consternation seized all classes in the nation. Everything seemed to be failing at once. The army had been defeated; the Bank had suspended payment, and now the fleet, the glory and pride of England, appeared on the point of deserting the national colours."*

* Alison, *Hist. Europe*, v. 5, p. 339.

We have not, however, come to an end of the catalogue of England's calamities at this critical time. Ireland was not only in actual rebellion, but in direct offensive alliance with our hereditary foe. The organization of "The United Irishmen" was perfected in 1797, and the descent made on her coasts, the particulars of which we shall have to relate, in the December previously, was through the agency of Tone and other revolutionists. Although a very large portion of the people remained even at that time sound to the core, the disaffected and discontented were by far the greater part, and combined some of the most daring and influential spirits, that ever dazzled, and at the same time misled, that unhappy, but most interesting nation. *Had* the projected invasion been successful—and we shall see how nearly it was being so—Ireland would have been lost, at least for a time, our own island would have lost its *prestige* amongst the nations, and her subjugation might have followed; or, what might have

even been more disastrous still, she would have been plunged into a civil war. In a word, it was, in the language of our greatest military commander, "an enemy's country." The DUKE OF WELLINGTON, writing in 1807, expresses the following remarkable opinion :

"I lay it down as decided, that Ireland in a view to military operations, must be considered as an enemy's country, and this view of our situation will point out what we ought to have for our security."*

In order rightly to appreciate the character and power of the mighty adversary, who looked upon England as "the last enemy" that he had to destroy, we must take another rapid, but fuller glance at the state of Europe at the concluding part of the year 1796.

On the termination of the armistice between the Austrians and French in May, in that year, the armies of France had penetrated into the heart of Germany, and Vienna seemed to be their aim. Although Germany

* Civil Correspondence of the Duke of Wellington by his son. Vol. 1.

had been roused into a state of indignation and active preparation, yet on comparing her successes with her defeats, the balance was in the favour of the French Republic, to which she could no longer be considered hostile. The death of the Empress Catherine, and the genius and character of her son and successor, Paul, also raised the hopes and ambition of France in Russia. She had also been as successful in her policy as in her arms. By means of artifice and intrigue she had succeeded in rivetting Prussia and Spain by a close alliance. In August, 1796, the latter power entered into a treaty, offensive and defensive with France, the object of which was in direct antagonism with this country, and she engaged to act in conjunction with her ally, and a formal declaration of war with England was the result.

Another formidable ally was made by France of the Batavian Republic, whose maritime force was strengthened to accumulate with those of France and Spain, in order

to deprive us of the supremacy of the sea, which had unquestionably been our prerogative by "the glorious first of June," 1794, when Lord Howe had captured the Toulon fleet, as well as by other naval victories.

The states of Italy were reduced into inaction; each of her princes was either at peace or in confederacy with the Republic—the Pope alone excepted, and he could not hold out much longer. Austria and Great Britain were now become the sole adversaries that stood against the triumphal march of the great conqueror of Europe.

England was thus "the cynosure of neighbouring eyes," which were directed to the vast preparations that were making simultaneously against her in France, Holland and Spain, the effect of which would be either to reduce her to the humiliated position of the greater part of Europe, or to raise her to a pinnacle of greatness she had never yet attained.

The astonishing series of brilliant victories which had accompanied "the Army of Italy," not only raised the power and reputation of

Napoleon Bonaparte, the Commander-in-Chief, but reflected so much lustre on the Directory, and particularly on Barras by whom he was appointed, that it was resolved to place under him a force proportionately great to the designs then contemplated, and a body of 30,000 men was selected from the armies of the Rhine towards the close of the year 1796.

On the 19th of February following, a peace was signed at Tolentino, by which a large portion of the Papal dominions was surrendered to the Republic, and immediate payment of fifteen millions of livres was also stipulated, ten of which were in money, and five in diamonds. The latter was offered to Napoleon as his share of the *opima spolia*. It seems that, glutton as he was for glory, the conqueror of Europe kept his eye on "the main chance;" at that time he is said to have been possessor of at least fifty millions of livres, in the hands of his bankers at Milan and other places.*

* Quarterly Review, Vol. 6, p. 45.

Napoleon now found himself strong enough to carry the war into the heart of the Austrian dominions; his approach to the vicinity of Vienna had spread general consternation; preliminaries of peace were, however, signed at Leoben, on the 14th of April, and concluded at Campo Formio on the 17th October.

"Posterity will scarcely believe that in the course of little more than a year, a Corsican adventurer had acquired the means of dictating the conditions on which the most powerful sovereign of Europe should continue to hold a part of his hereditary dominions."*

Thus, we have seen how power after power, state after state, principality after principality, had fallen beneath the conqueror's feet. His triumph had only to be swelled by the downfall of England, and vast preparations for the accomplishment of that event were accordingly commenced. In 1797, the Directory of the French Republic, under the real or pretended design of invading this country, assembled between Brest and the

* Quarterly Review, Vol. 6, p. 46.

Texel 150,000 men, on whom were bestowed the proud title of "The Army of England." This immense force was to be transported across the Channel in flat-bottomed boats, purposely constructed and equipped for the execution of that stupendous project. As an inducement to the Irish insurgents to join the force, the Directory represented to them that 270,000 men were at that time "fully equipped."*

The command of this fine army was given to Napoleon, then General Bonaparte, and with it the following instructions.

"Crown so illustrious a life by a conquest which the great nation owes to its outraged dignity. Go ! and by the punishment of the Cabinet of London, strike terror into the hearts of all who would miscalculate the power of a free people. Go, and chain the monster who presses on the seas ; go, and punish in London the injured rights of humanity. Hardly shall the tricolor flag wave

* Sir Francis Head, "The Defenceless State of Great Britain," 2nd ed. p. 221, (1850).

on the blood-stained shores of the Thames ere an unanimous cry will bless your arrival ; and that generous nation, perceiving the dawn of its felicity, will receive you as liberators, who come, not to combat and enslave, but to put a period to its calamities.”*

It will be seen, however, that this magnificent army never came nearer to our “blood-stained” shores than the glimpse they obtained of them from Boulogne ; and it seems that Napoleon, to whom the command was entrusted, thought the moment had not arrived for a successful attempt. “The unanimous cry” and the promised blessing did not therefore fall on his ears, and “the dawn” of England’s “felicity” was delayed ; and she was under the painful necessity of continuing up to the present time, about sixty-three years, still in the night of that dark degeneracy, from which the mild beams of the sun of Robespierre had just emancipated France.

It would appear due to the sagacity of

* Ibid. 221.

Bonaparte and his untiring vigilance, that he did not visit us in his capacity of "liberator" with his 150,000 doves—each with an olive branch.

"According to orders Napoleon proceeded to the coasts of the Channel; and after visiting Boulogne, Calais, Dunkirk, Antwerp, and Flushing, after sitting up till midnight at every town, interrogating the sailors, fishermen, smugglers, listening to their objections with patient attention, delivered the following sage opinion: "It is too doubtful a chance, I will not risk it. I will not hazard on such a throw the Fate of France."*

"The army of England" had therefore to exercise for a time the virtue of patience; but in the mean time another expedition on a formidable but much less magnificent scale was fitted out, for a descent on our coasts. We shall have to record the history of that attempt, and the causes which led to its failure, which neither added to the

* Sir Francis Head, "Defenceless State," &c. p. 223.

reputation of the country which meditated the attack, or which escaped from it.

The result we shall see was accomplished in far less time than could have been imagined by the most sanguine of our patriots. The very heavens seemed to have enlisted the elements in our favour ; and abortive as the attempt was, the nearness of the danger, and the apparent practicability of it, stirred up in our hearts and blood a flame of patriotism that upwards of sixty years of safety and security have not yet extinguished ; and England may with honest exultation look back on those days of peril and tribulation, and on what she with her "own right arm" unassisted and unsupported did actually accomplish.

The retrospect of these events has a force and meaning, at the present time, too obvious to need pointing out. Under very different circumstances,—stronger and mightier in every respect, both from within and without—England is again called upon to consider the possibility, if not probability of another

violation of her peaceful coasts. The same power that set its foot on our shores in 1544 at Brighton, then, if anything, a mere obscure fishing village, when a fleet of 150 ships of the first class, and about ninety smaller vessels, sailed from France to attack us, and were beaten back with great loss, not by trained men at arms but by the country people only*—the same power that a short time afterwards made a descent on the Isle of Wight in three different places,† and finally retreated under the triumphant arms of our Admiral Dudley—the same power which in 1760 gave the command of a small armament to Commodore Thurot, (a traitor Irishman, whose real name was O'Farrell,) and who landed one thousand men at Carrickfergus, where they plundered the town, but were ultimately defeated by Captain Elliot, near the Isle of Man, on the 28th February, when the squadron was taken, and its rebel

* Creasy's "Invasions of England," p. 91.

† Creasy's "Invasions of England," p. 92.

leader killed—the same power that on the 15th of December, 1796, despatched a formidable expedition of seventeen sail of the line, and thirteen frigates, carrying an army of fifteen thousand men at arms commanded by General Hoche, one of the ablest of the Revolutionary Generals, to overthrow our dominion in Ireland—the same power that two months afterwards in February, 1797, sent three large ships of war and a lugger, which anchored off Fishguard on the Welsh coast, when part of the force they contained actually effected a landing, and proceeded to plunder, and were frightened into a surrender by the appearance of a handful of militia, yeomanry corps, and fencibles, under the command of Lord Cawdor, “backed up” by a body of Welsh women in scarlet whittles, or hooded cloaks, which seemed to have struck terror into the hearts of the invaders;—the same power that from 1803 to 1805 assembled at Boulogne a mighty armament of between one hundred and thirty and one hundred and forty thousand picked men of “the army of Italy,” and fifteen thousand

horses, under the protection of fifty ships of the line, and under the guidance and command of him who wrote, "if we have but the power of crossing but for twelve hours ENGLAND IS NO MORE!"*—the same power is, we say, again at work, the Eagle is again straining his gaze ready to pounce upon what *he* believes his destined prey—with all the schooling that adversity has bestowed—with all the fierce vindictiveness and implacable hatred, that baffled attempts and inglorious defeats can have kindled up against us.

The same spirit of hatred to all arbitrary power and aggression which roused up in the hearts of our fathers and grandfathers, during the latter part of the last and beginning of the present century, the feelings of patriotism—the same spirit that kindled in the peaceful folds and industrious homes of England then, a martial and an heroic spirit, and a disposition to repel the invader—still, thank God! animates us now, still encourages us, and, although clouds may hang over our national horizon, bids us not to be

* Napoleon's own words.

faint-hearted, but to remember what noble deeds our fathers did of old ; and, as we seize our rifles, to ask reverently a blessing on them, and on the work *we* may have to do.

That that work may never have to be done, every God-fearing, every true-hearted Englishman, will devoutly pray ; but *if* it ever should have to be done, every God-fearing, true-hearted Englishman will be ready to meet it, prepared with his rifle, as his father before him was with his musket or pike, ready to fight not only for the country that gave him birth, but to repel from its sacred shores the desecrating foot of the invader. Ready, ay, ready to fight, if needs be, for the Queen he loves as well as obeys with his heart's truest fealty—ready to fight for the time-honoured fanes and altars of his fatherland—ready to fight for those glorious institutions which he holds at such inestimable value—ready to fight for those sacred homes and hearths and domestic ties which knit him to them, and which, in his “heart of hearts,” he vows shall never be violated or polluted by a brutal and licentious soldiery !

CHAPTER II.

Projected Invasion of the English Coast at Fellingham Marshes — Marquis Cornwallis prepares — State of Ireland at this period — Causes of disaffection — Progress of the Rebellion — “The United Irishmen” — Spread of the Society — Its Alliance with the French Government — Lawless State of the Country — Narrative of Hoche’s attempted Invasion of Ireland in 1796 — Extent of the Armament — Confidence of Napoleon and Hoche of its success — The Expedition baffled by the Weather and becomes divided — Arrival at Bantry Bay of part — Rising of the Country — Return to Port — Disastrous Results of the Armament — Lord Cornwallis’ Despatch — Loyalty of the Irish People — Dublin Volunteers and Yeomanry — Debates in Parliament — Naval mismanagement — The Ministry severely attacked — Mr. Whitbread — Mr. Dundas — Mr. Pitt — Lord Grenville — Marquis of Lansdowne — Reflections.

ACTIVE preparations for a descent on our coasts were believed to be in forwardness

many months previously to those more extensive ones, by the formation of the celebrated "Army of England." As early as the 1st of November, 1796, the English Government received intelligence that troops and vessels, which were known to be in readiness at and near Dunkirk, were intended to commence operations at Fellingham Marshes, near Bradwell, Mersey Island, and St. Osyth's Bay.

The Marquis Cornwallis expressly alludes to these manifestations of the enemy's intention, and, in a letter addressed to Major-General Ross, of that date, says, "at all events the public determination of the intention to invade the country makes it necessary for us to be serious on our part. I purpose going to Colchester on Thursday next."*

It, however, subsequently transpired, notwithstanding these notes of preparation against our own immediate coasts, that Ireland was really to be the point of attack.

* Marquis Cornwallis' Correspondence, by Ross, vol. ii. p. 333.

A long course of misgovernment and neglect had brought Ireland at this period into a most alarming state of disaffection. The grossest corruption prevailed in the Irish Parliament, and the Ministry of the day was able to carry any measure, however obnoxious to the feelings of the people or to the real interests of the country. Owing to the difficulties in which the sister kingdom was plunged in 1778, the regular troops were nearly all withdrawn from Ireland, a general flame burst forth, and the Volunteer corps was formed. Between forty and fifty thousand men were enrolled, who chose their own officers, the latter rejecting royal commissions (a most significant hint), and the first Earl of Charlemont was nominated General.

In 1791 a most powerful and dangerous combination was formed at Belfast, under the name of "The Society of United Irishmen." Reform in Parliament was their nominal, but their real object was to divorce Ireland from her allegiance to Great Britain, and to establish a republic.

The Society became formidable in its ramifications and power. Its affairs were governed by "An Executive Council," who gained the co-operation of men of the highest influence and talent, and inflamed the passions of the lower classes. Early in 1792 emissaries were sent to the different regiments to seduce the non-commissioned officers and privates from their loyalty and fidelity.

Only a few of those who enrolled themselves members of this Society were made acquainted in the first instance with its ultimate designs. It afterwards transpired that its leaders were in direct communication with the Directory of the French Republic. A document, containing a detailed account of the state of Ireland at that time, was drawn up by Mr. Hamilton Rowan and Mr. Theobald Wolfe Tone, and transmitted to Paris.*

In the summer of 1796 the Society gained

* Marquis of Cornwallis' Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 341.

a large accession of strength, by altering the admission oath, so as to induce the more moderate Reformers to join the real Republicans. The leaders were now sufficiently strong in their own estimation to avow their intentions openly, and to embrace with eagerness an offer made by the French Directory, to place a sufficient force at their disposal. At this time Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Mr. Arthur O'Connor were despatched to Paris in order that the necessary arrangements might be made, through which Ireland was to be for ever disunited from this country.

While this negotiation was going forward the grossest outrages were committed in the counties of Roscommon, Leitrim, Longford, Meath, Westmeath, and Kildare, by "the Defenders," a lawless banditti, who were believed to be acting with, if not under "the Direction" of the Society. The lawless state of the country inevitably led to the most stringent measures on the part of the Government, and by the Insurrection Act

increased powers were given to the magistracy ; yeomanry corps were formed, and the Habeas Corpus Act suspended. At this juncture an accredited agent of the French Directory arrived in Ireland, and undertook that an army of 25,000 men, with competent supplies of arms and ammunition, should be forthcoming. Under this promise a formal alliance was entered into between the Executive Committee and the French Directory ; and the former devoted all their energies to the military organization of the country.*

Such was the relation that France stood in towards Ireland, when, in 1796, the Directory determined to despatch an expedition for a descent upon Ireland, the command of which was given to General Hoche, an officer of the highest reputation.

The General had pledged himself that the expedition should sail in the autumn of that year, and as far as the military preparations were concerned, they were complete in Sep-

* Rose. Marquis of Cornwallis' Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 342.

tember. By delays and difficulties, caused by the Marine department, and an adverse wind which blew direct from the Irish coast, the 15th of December had arrived before the expedition sailed from the harbour of Brest.

The armament was on a scale equally formidable as magnificent. It consisted of seventeen sail of the line (each of which carried six hundred fighting men) thirteen frigates, and an equal number of transports. The combined force was to have been twenty-five thousand troops, the very flower of the French army, with which Hoche had effected the pacification of La Vendée;* but fifteen thousand only actually sailed.

No doubt seems to have been entertained by Napoleon that *had* Hoche succeeded in effecting a landing of this fine army he must have been successful—and the odds were undoubtedly greatly in his favour. We have seen that Ireland was torn to pieces by internal dissension—that she was in actual and

* Creasy, *Invasions of England*, page 200.

friendly communication with the French Government—in point of fact she was a beleaguered town where the besieged are acting in concert with the besiegers. Her coasts were unprotected, and the greater proportion of her population were believed to be favourable to her invaders ; England, her mother country, could not at the hour of peril stretch out an arm to save ; for it is one of the most wonderful facts of this extraordinary story, that during six days, while the shattered remains of the French fleet lay tossing about within sight of the Irish coast, not a single British ship of war was sighted ; and it was shewn in the debates that followed in both Houses, which we shall subsequently epitomise, that had only a third part of the expedition landed at Bantry Bay, their intended destination, Cork was at their mercy with a million and half value of stores and merchandize.

It would seem however that the Great Disposer of all events,—that “ guides the whirlwind, and directs the storm” to fulfil his

bidding—that scattered the Spanish Armada over the face of our insulted waters in the time of Elizabeth—that raised the gale which dispersed the squadron off the Welsh coast two months later—was our ally—and working for us, at this most critical moment of our history. For a full month previous to the embarkation of the troops from Brest the wind blew direct in their teeth from Ireland. They had scarcely left Brest, before several of the largest ships struck upon the rocks in the mouth of the harbour, and some were lost or rendered unfit for service. Before the expedition had recovered from this catastrophe, the frigate “*La Fraternité*,” having on board Hoche the commander of the forces, the Admiral of the fleet and the principal officers, (which, to use a familiar phrase, was “putting all the eggs in one basket,”) got separated from the rest of the squadron, which it never rejoined, until their return to harbour, after their ignominious failure.

On the 19th of December (the day following its departure) a violent storm arose,

which continued during the whole of the expedition, scattered the fleet, and damaged many of the ships which were not disabled by the previous disaster. On the 24th, after having been no less than four times dispersed by fogs and tempestuous weather, Admiral Bouvet found himself off Bantry Bay. But with what a different result to his previous sanguine calculations ! The noble armament, which was to pour from the holds of its vessels a force of fifteen thousand warriors, was reduced to seven ships of the line, and seven others, (Moore says in his *Memoirs of Lord Edward Fitzgerald*, sixteen was the whole number, "great and small"), and the fighting men were reduced to six thousand five hundred—less than one-half that had embarked !

It does not appear that any portion even of this reduced force succeeded in effecting a landing ; but the *Annual Register* for 1796 states, that in order to reconnoitre the country, a boat was despatched towards the shore, and which was immediately captured. If the French relied unreservedly on the co-

operation of the Irish, they must have been woefully disappointed. Multitudes of the population appeared on the beach in readiness to oppose their landing. Even, however, at this moment, had a daring spirit animated the expedition, and hazarded a landing, there seems every reason to believe that success would have rewarded them. Fortunately, however, for the destinies of Europe and the peace of the world, that spirit was wanting. In the absence of Hoche, the command had devolved on General Grouchy, and he hesitated on taking so bold a step with a weakened and dispirited force. Had he "the pluck" to have made the attempt, it is difficult to conjecture the extent of the consequences.

Professor Creasy quotes* the opinion of a "learned," but formerly "gallant, friend" of his, that Grouchy had twice the power of changing the destinies of Europe in his hands, and twice wanted nerve to act: the first, on the occasion when he flinched from

* "Invasions of England," p. 211, note.

landing the French army at Bantry Bay ; and the next, when he failed to lead his whole force from Wavre to the scene of decisive conflict at Waterloo. Marshal Grouchy, we are also informed by another authority, was "originally an officer in the *Garde de Corps* ; he soon joined the revolutionary army, and served with great distinction. His military career ended with Waterloo, where his conduct gave rise to much discussion." *

Napoleon did not often make such mistakes in the choice of his instruments (supposing Grouchy was appointed by him) ; some, however, of the boldest conceptions of his genius were marred by the execution of them ; while, on the other hand, the more brilliant exploits of his Marshals not only carried out his designs, but in accomplishing them added to his own glory.

Resuming our narrative,—after lying some few days in the bay—idly cruising off it—a tremendous gale set in right from the shore,

* Marquis of Cornwallis' Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 343.

and rendered a landing quite impracticable, and no intelligence having been received from Hoche since the separation of the frigate in which he and the other principal officers were, nothing was left to the French Admiral but to quit his position, and make the best of his way back to France. It is said, that this movement was opposed by the military on board, who remonstrated, and insisted on the practicability of a landing ; but the plan of the expedition was in the possession of Hoche, and the want of it might have excused the hesitation of Grouchy. The Admiral then gave orders to sail for Brest, and which he reached on the last day of December, with four ships of the line, two frigates, and one lugger, and which were all he brought back of the seventeen sail that he had led so proudly forth from that very harbour but sixteen days previously ! Hoche subsequently found his way to Bantry Bay, but after the main body of the squadron had left, and which he accordingly followed, and made the best of his way back to France,

not having seen a single sail of the scattered fleet during the whole period that had elapsed since his separation from them. He ended the expedition with characteristic ignominy, being, according to Moore, put on shore by a small shallop in the middle of the night, about a league from La Rochelle. The other division of the fleet which had been scattered over the waters, subsequently slunk back to Brest, with the loss, however, of five ships, two of the line and three frigates, one of the latter having been taken by the English, and two foundered at sea, with one of the former. Such was the result of an expedition, on the success of which Hoche had reckoned so securely, that one of his last acts before setting out on it was to urge on the Directory the speedy outfit of another.

Instructive revelations were made on both sides of the Channel; while they revealed to England's enemies, her vulnerable points to attack, it lessened in some degree her own arrogance, although pardonably inflated by her recent great naval successes, and gave a

convincing proof that a superior naval force is not in itself *alone*, a certain security against invasion. It is no less wonderful than true, that with two Channel fleets at the time for the protection of our coasts, Ireland was sixteen days at the mercy of a vindictive foe, and saved alone from conquest by the interposition of the elements. Even after the appearance of the enemy in Bantry Bay there was nothing like an adequate force for the efficient defence of the country, the whole of the regular troops amounting to about three thousand. Cork had indeed a narrow escape of falling with all its stores and provisions (estimated at a million and a half sterling,) into the hands of the invaders.

“And where,” it may be asked, “were our wooden walls?” They were no where to be found when wanted ; probably because they were directed by heads made of the same tough and impenetrable substance.

“Justice to Ireland,” was the war-cry of the day, as it is now ; and although rebellion, treason, and insurrection rallied under that

cry, we must do justice to the great part of her mistaken people, by fairly giving them the credit due to them for the manner in which they received the hostile demonstration.

We have already shewn that the French relied on the co-operation of the Irish; through the means of some of the expatriated rebels, to whom they had not only given shelter, but with whom they were in strict alliance. Through the secret correspondence between the French government and the heads of the Irish party, the former had become fully acquainted with the vulnerable points of the coast, and the almost universal disaffection of the people.

Treason existed indeed, but we shall see that loyal hearts still beat within the green isle. The despatch of Lord Cornwallis, then the Lord Lieutenant, dated from Dublin Castle, on the 17th of January, 1797, and addressed to the Duke of Portland, the Home Minister of the day, gives an accurate account of the event, from which we have gleaned the following additional circumstances.

The writer testifies to "the best spirit" being manifested by the regular and militia forces, and expresses his firm conviction that if a landing had been effected they would have displayed the utmost fidelity. When the flank companies of the Antrim regiment were formed, the whole regiment turned out to a man, with expressions of the greatest eagerness to march; while another militia regiment, (the Downshire,) also declared to a man that they would stand or fall by their officers.

The Lord Lieutenant then goes on to say that as the weather was extremely severe he ordered them a proportion of spirits on their march, and an allowance of fourpence per day to their wives till their return.

As they passed through the towns and villages on their route, the utmost attention was shewn them, (by which we understand they were liberally provided with provisions) so that the meat provided by the commissariat was not consumed. "The poor people

often shared their potatoes with them; and dressed their meat without demanding payment," and Banagher is particularly mentioned, there being no gentleman or principal farmer to set the example. At Carlow a considerable subscription was made for them, and Limerick and Cork vied with each other in facilitating the carriage of their baggage and artillery. At Galway the zeal and ardour of the inhabitants and yeomanry were most conspicuous.

In short, the Lord Lieutenant writes, "the general good disposition of the people through the south and west was so prevalent that had the enemy landed their hope of assistance from the inhabitants would have been totally disappointed."

The yeomanry corps gave their best aid, and they were headed by "the noblemen and gentry of the first rank," and much of the express and escort was performed by them, and in Cork, Limerick and Galway they took garrison duty. On the authority of Lord Shannon, it is stated that men of three

or four thousand a year took upon themselves the laborious work of escorting baggage and carrying expresses. The merchants of Dublin, many of them of eminence, marched sixteen Irish miles with convoys of arms to the north, whither it was conducted by reliefs of yeomanry.

Dublin comes in for its share of praise on this occasion. The corps (we presume the yeomanry) had been formed of the most respectable barristers, attorneys, merchants, gentlemen, and citizens, and their number was so considerable, and their zeal in mounting guard so satisfactory, that the authorities were enabled to reduce the garrison with perfect safety.

The numbers are given, but with scarcely sufficient clearness. "The number of yeomanry fully appointed and disciplined in Dublin exceeds 2000, above 400 of whom are horse. The whole number of corps approved by government amount to 440, exclusive of the Dublin corps. The gross number is nearly 25,000."

Many prominent examples of individual loyalty and spirit were manifested, and the lower order of Catholics were strongly impressed by an address from Dr. Moylen, the titular Bishop of Cork. Honourable mention is also made of the services of the Earl of Ormonde and Lord Kenmare.

We have failed to meet with any reliable statement impugning the correctness of the above statements. Making a fair deduction, on account of its being a government despatch, we cannot but consider it as highly honourable to our fellow-subjects of Ireland. We find noblemen and gentlemen of property, lawyers, tradesmen, and the peasantry, all animated by the same spirit. Surely *these* were "United Irishmen," banded together, not for the purpose of rebellion and revolt, but for the holiest of all earthly combinations—the protection of their hearths and homes and altars from the assault of the invader.

In the month of March following, this attempt of the French became the subject of

debate in both Houses of Parliament, Mr. Whitbread (the Roebuck of the day) and the other leaders of the opposition made a severe attack on the naval commanders and authorities, and moved for a committee of inquiry into the conduct of Ministers. Mr. Dundas (one of the Government) had the countenance as well as the courage to say that "invasion was nothing but a bugbear;" for which expression he was severely handled by Mr. Grey, who with characteristic boldness expressed his opinion that the Admiralty should be impeached, for not having a fleet ready to meet the enemy. The Government was also defended by Mr. Windham (the then Secretary of War), and Mr. Pitt; and the motion was subsequently lost by the previous question being carried by a majority of 201 against 62.

The subject was also debated in the House of Lords on the 18th of March, on a motion by the Earl of Albemarle, and Ministers were again ruthlessly handled, but came off with a majority of 74 against 14.

Although the Government was triumphant in both Houses, yet a most uneasy, if not humiliating feeling must have been produced throughout the country. It appears indisputable that the Ministers must have known that the invasion, either of England or Ireland, or perhaps both, was imminent, more especially of the latter, from the preparations of the enemy. Although we had two Channel fleets, neither was stationed on the coast for protection. Most miserable delays took place in the sailing of one of them (Lord Bridport's), and then it carried so little sail that it did not arrive at Bantry Bay until *after* the enemy had retired! The other fleet under Admiral Colpoys was equally unsuccessful; the Admiral found several of his ships in want of the most essential necessities, water and fuel included; and to crown all, after a fruitless search by his squadron, without falling in with the French, he returned to port on the very day that the other Admiral had sailed. Thus with two Channel fleets for our protection neither fell in with the enemy. "But,"

said the "heaven-born Minister" (Mr. Pitt), "*had* either one fleet or the other been so fortunate as to have met the enemy, what prodigies of valour *might* have been expected!" He then with admirable dexterity brings off the culprit Admirals and the Admiralty, by urging that "it was not extraordinary that they were unable to find out the place of rendezvous, when the French Admiral and General Hoche, who were in possession of the secret, and sailed in the same expedition, as well as the other captains of the fleet, had, from the same causes of weather, never been able to join it." The blunder of the enemy was therefore to be received as a set off for our own blunder!

It is, however, indisputable, that with one fleet for our protection on the French coast and another which was to be always ready for sea, an enemy was opposite to our coasts for sixteen days, and with one or two exceptions returned to his harbour with most of his ships unscathed, except by the winds of heaven. The Ministers threw the blame on *the weather*,

and one (Lord Grenville) said he would resign when he could find a person daring enough to contend against the winds. On which the Marquis of Lansdowne retorted, "what the public wanted was not a man who could govern the winds and waves, but one who could govern *with* them."

If any thing could have been more bungling than the manner in which the expedition was planned by our enemies, it was that in which it was met by ourselves.

With all our boasted supremacy of the seas, and our Channel fleets, we could not preserve our coasts from insult! Surely the result of this invasion was humiliating both to the aggressors and the attacked, and at a distance of sixty-three years we may ask, —Have we not still occasion to remember the descent of the French on the Irish coast in the foggy nights of December, 1796?

CHAPTER III.

Continued preparations for invasion by the French, Dutch, and Spanish Powers—Inducements held out by the French press, and inflammatory proclamation to attack England—Extensive preparations at Brest—Descent on the Welsh Coast in February, 1797—Landing effected at Ilfracombe—Driven off by the North Devon Volunteers—Arrival at Fishguard—Different versions of the attack—Official account from the London Gazette and Dispatches—Defenceless state of the Welsh Coasts—Capabilities of Milford Haven, and Mr. Page's plan for its improvement and protection.

NOTWITHSTANDING the disastrous result of General Hoche's expedition to Ireland in the December previously, the expectation of the French of making a successful attack on that part of our empire continued as high as ever. These were raised by the extensive preparations, both in the ports of Holland and of Spain, against us. In the latter

kingdom the influence of the French Directory was sufficiently strong to procure the equipment of a very large number of vessels to act in conjunction with their remaining strength at sea, against that of England, which they believed could not withstand so powerful a combination. The design was for the great part of the Spanish Navy to effect a junction with the French Fleet at Brest, where General Hoche had fixed his head-quarters, and which had become, by the assembling of both soldiers and sailors, a military as well as a naval station.

On the return of the fleet to Brest, a proclamation was issued to the troops, by which they were apprised that another attempt would be made on our coasts, and which only waited for more favourable weather to be carried into positive execution.

Whether this design was actually to be put into operation, or intended merely to keep England in a constant state of alarm and preparation, or to divert attention from the real objects France had in view, can only

be conjectured by the result that followed. Every appearance of serious intention was manifested ; the hereditary hatred of the French people to their English neighbours was stimulated to the highest point of exasperation, both in the senate, and by means of the press ; and the promise of unlimited plunder was held out as the reward.

In a pamphlet which was published that year under the auspices of the Directory, and by its immediate orders—for pamphleteering in those days, as in the present, owed its inspiration from “ head-quarters ”—appeared an address to the French Nation at large, exciting them to vengeance upon the English. We give the following extract, which is copied as authentic, in the Annual Register for 1797, p. 101.

“ England was the richest country in the world, and they (the Directory) would give it up to the French to be plundered by them. You shall march to the capital of that haughty nation ; you shall seize the immense heaps of gold in the Bank of London ;

the prodigious wealth contained in their shops, their warehouses, and their magazines; the riches contained in their gilded palaces, and their stately mansions; the accumulations of public and private property; the treasures, in short, of every species that are to be found in that opulent country, and you will return to France loaded with the spoils of England."

The address concluded by assuring them that the disinterested and patriotic government that made it (although it would seem that they contracted for a loan with the Parisian Bankers on the security of the plunder they were to obtain by their glorious attack on us) had no intention whatever *themselves* of sharing in the booty. Whatever pillage the adventurers took was to be their own; arms and ammunition, and vessels to convey them were to be supplied without stint. Once landed (and that was already regarded as *un fait accompli*) they would not experience the slightest difficulty in finding their way to London, and their prowess was to achieve

the rest. We do not doubt the sack of London *would* have followed as a matter of course—but it is not quite so clear to us how they would have found their way there.

Stimulated by these and similar detestable appeals, and by even yet more detestable “Proclamations” of the Executive Government, (we allude especially to those of the 5th and 21st Brumaire) we cannot wonder that the fierce passions, as well as the cupidity of the populace of France, were wound up to the highest pitch of frantic eagerness for attack. There were, however, even in those days, Frenchmen who shrunk back from the proposed undertaking, by which a nation was to rise up against a neighbouring one, divided only by a narrow strait, and plunder and sack it, not only as a freebooting expedition, but as a violation of the laws of nations, and of every other law, human and divine ; others regarded it with a more calculating but not less condemning spirit. They felt, although they dared not acknowledge it, that the coasts, which were thus destined to be ravaged, were

guarded by fleets, that had not only vanquished their intended invaders, but destroyed their commerce, and that those coasts would, at the first appearance of an invading foe, swarm with resolute and disciplined men, ready with their first as well as their last blood, to avenge even a look that threatened their beloved country with dishonour.

Mad as the project seemed, preposterous as the results and insufficient as the means by which they were to be brought about were, it will be interesting to see how the daring enterprise was conceived, and the infernal passions of those who were to achieve it were excited to the requisite culminating point. The proclamation of the French Directory, addressed to the French people, and dated Brumaire (November 21), thus speaks of England and its councils :

“It is now one year or more since a faithless enemy, restless and buzzing, has disturbed all the Cabinets, loudly proposing peace, and secretly blowing up the embers of war. They affect to extinguish with one

hand the torch which they are rekindling with the other. They send out with pomp their pacificator, yet they stifle every overture which has any tendency towards a pacification. This enemy your indignation can at once point out and name ; it is the Cabinet of St. James, the most corrupting and corrupted of the governments of Europe ;—it is the English Government.

“ It is not only against French liberty that this Government had directed its conspiracy, it is against the whole world. This perfidious Government wishes to trouble, subjugate, or desolate every part of the globe—Say, Americans, who were directly or indirectly your real rulers?—Unfortunate Indians speak, by what detestable arts this Government has founded its tyranny amongst ye?—And you, ye Europeans, still more unfortunate, innocent inhabitants of Franconia, and of the Northern Alps ; ye numerous victims of the scourge of war, say who have been the most ardent instigators of the scourge of war, where immense treasures have been en-

gulphed, where more than a million of men have been slain, and where the eye of peace now can view nothing but general mourning, universal misery and vast despair? It is under these circumstances that the Cabinet of St. James has revealed to afflicted Europe, that she alone has felt nothing of these vast disasters. Hear the discourse held from the height of the throne. 'Our revenues,' says the King of England, 'have been meliorated; our national industry has had even a new increase; our commerce has passed its former limits.'

"If the King of England has told you the truth, what a terrible lesson is this for you, ye other powers of Europe!—of what description is that power which is interested in your discords, who derives an interest from your calamities, who prospers in your distress, and who fattens on the tears, the blood, and the spoils of other nations."

We can fancy the superlative contempt with which Englishmen read this inflammable farrago, but what follows is, if

possible, a completer combination of mendacity, hypocrisy, and dishonesty. "The great nation (France, of course,) will avenge the universe, and for this end, Frenchmen, it offers you several means. *The first and most rapid is a descent upon England.* By your unheard of exploits you are disused from reckoning upon obstacles. In such enterprizes the name of the army is the promise of triumph, and the justice of its cause the guarantee of success. There is no longer a time to discuss the means, or to dwell upon the probability of effecting a descent. Where Frenchmen are at the front there will be the victory. THE ARMY OF ENGLAND IS ABOUT TO DICTATE PEACE IN LONDON, and there, Republicans, you shall find auxiliaries. You will find there a number of men whom reason has not so far abandoned as not to feel the odium which their governors have cast upon the English name. You will find there thousands of men who have long struggled to promote parliamentary reform. You will there find artizans without number who sigh

for peace, and whom the war reduces to wretchedness, and who weigh as light in the balance of their distress the magnificent trumpery of royal harangues, the illusions of manifestoes, and the chimeras of conquest. You will also find the Irish Nation, oppressed for so many years, and which has borne with so much pain the chain of a court which has been nourished by its sweat, fed by its blood, and which now insults its despair !

“ A war against the Cabinet of St. James is the unanimous cry of France. What glory is promised to the ‘ Army of England ’ (meaning the French Army so called) : it is only necessary to inspire them with enthusiasm,—it is only necessary to remind them of what they have done. The walls of fortified towns fell before them ; the first generals of the age could not resist them. Bender was taken prisoner at Luxemburgh, and Wurmser at Mantua. The tri-coloured standard now floats over the banks of the Rhine, and of the *Ægean* sea. After so many victories what can add to the ardour of

French soldiers? They hear the voice of their country, and remember their own exploits.”*

After the above specimen it would seem that “the magnificent trumpery,” which the writer characterizes royal, may with great fairness be extended to republican harangues. It is not, however, the Republic Directory alone that has been guilty of such inflammable incentives to rapine and bloodshed. *La perfide Albion* has in more recent and more tranquil times, and under a different dispensation, been inveighed against with an equal disregard of candour, truth and justice.

We will now resume our narrative: “the mountain” we have beheld in all the pangs of parturition, and now let us behold what it brought forth. Was it a Mont Blanc? or an infant Chimborozza? or a “*ridiculus mus*?” of the meanest and minutest form of performance?

The whole month of January, and more than half of the succeeding month, elapsed before any active measures were taken at

* “State Papers,” Ann. Reg. 1797, p. 321.

Brest, where we have already seen General Hoche had taken up his head-quarters. At last another expedition set sail from that port, which seems rather destined to perplex the ministry, than to put the country under subjection. After promising, in a truly Gascon spirit, to lead the invaders to London, and to load them with pillage, the brave leaders contented themselves with "unheard of exploits," the most daring of which was probably the spoliation of a few hen roosts, or the capture of an uncared-for pig, or the equally glorious destruction of a few undefended merchantmen.

In that month of February (1797) a corps of about fourteen hundred men, embarked in four vessels, three of them large frigates, and sailed from Brest. On the 20th they anchored at Ilfracombe, in the north of Devonshire, where they scuttled several merchantmen. Probably they would have destroyed all the shipping in the harbour, but they were apprised that a body of troops was marching to its defence. Volunteers of

the present day! Riflemen that are now gathering around us, hear, it was the NORTH DEVON REGIMENT OF VOLUNTEERS, commanded by Colonel Orchard, that came to the rescue. The brave French at the sight of them left Ilfracombe, and stood over to the headland off Saint David's, in Pembrokeshire, and anchored in Fishguard Bay, on Wednesday the 22nd of February. Their landing was, however, not quite so easy as they had anticipated. The shore was covered with rocks, over which they clambered with difficulty, and it was the 23rd before their whole force had disembarked. They then advanced into the country, expecting, according to advice that they had received, that numbers would flock to their standard. But a very different reception awaited them. The whole country was instantly alarmed, and the people gathered from all parts—not to join—but to attack them. In the course of that day, more than three thousand men were hastily collected of whom seven hundred (and no more than seven hundred) were well

trained militia. Lord CAWDOR, put himself at the head of a local volunteer corps, and promptly and gallantly marched directly against the enemy, whom he reached before night-fall. Instead, however, of being met with either a vigorous attack or defence, the most dangerous missive he had to encounter was a letter from the French commander, M. TATE, *Chef de Brigade*, presented by one of his officers with the rather vague information, that the circumstances under which the troops were landed, rendered military operations unnecessary, as they would only tend to bloodshed and pillage, and intimating the desire of himself and brother officers to enter into a negociation for a surrender.

This conciliatory proposal was met by Lord Cawdor requiring the whole body to surrender prisoners of war. They at once yielded to this condition, and on the following day laid down their arms.

They had no artillery, but enough of powder and ball sufficient to load seventy carts.

One half of the force consisted of picked veterans, but the other moiety were stated to be galley slaves, released from their fetters on condition of their joining in this desperate enterprise. Their ragged appearance fully justified this suspicion, and the first object that occupied them on landing was to provide themselves with decent apparel wherever they could lay their hands upon it, and this, although many outrages were committed, seems to have been the most valuable of their booty.

The above scanty details we have gleaned almost verbatim from the Annual Register of the year, although we have other materials by our side, in order that it may be seen what was the English account of the transaction. As it stands, it is undoubtedly very much like a burlesque of an invasion; but we question whether the French account, "by one of themselves," is more dignified in its details, or will afford any future French Homer materials to construct an Iliad.

In the month of December, 1859, allusion

having been made, and certainly in very inaccurate terms, to this attempt of the French, at a public meeting by the Honourable George Denman, a French gentleman of the name of Tate resident in London, and who appears to be descended from the officer who had the command of the expedition, came to rescue the name of his ancestor from the obloquy which he seemed to have thought attached to it through Mr. Denman's erroneous account of "the affair."

According to Mr. Tate's version, the attempt was rendered unsuccessful by a disagreement, which occurred between the Naval and Military commanders, by which those who landed were left unprotected, and without field pieces; they were, therefore, driven to surrender, and which Mr. Tate affirms they did on the same day that they landed. A paper war ensued in "the Times" newspaper, in which appeared, on the 23rd of December, a letter, from a Mr. Alexander Ridgway, who gives his version of this memorable invasion. It appears that Mr.

Ridgway shares in the glory, which Mr. Tate claims, of being descended from one of the belligerents engaged. He denies, however, that the three French frigates hove off the coast on account of any disagreement between the Military and Naval commanders, but because they were driven off by a gale, which, in that superstitious part of the country, was regarded as an omen similar to the Protestant wind of the Prince of Orange. He also declares that during the short visit that the French paid us, that they did plunder, and that, unluckily for the lustre of the enterprise, the plunder led to their capture. A short time before the landing a ship laden with wine was wrecked on that coast, and every cottage contained a part of the cargo. No doubt, (for no one could suspect the Welsh of taking an unfair advantage of the opportunity) they were simply taking care of it on behalf of the owners when they should turn up. Lord Cawdor then—according to Mr. Ridgway, Mr. Campbell, a Captain of Volunteers,

which is an undoubted mistake—marched upon them with a handful of militia, yeomanry, and fencibles, and found the foe, like the great Alexander, “with love and wine oppress’d.” Mr. Ridgway also confirms another statement denied by Mr. Tate, that “the charming Welshes” actually accompanied their allies to the field; and assures us that they were marshalled in their red whittles or hooded cloaks by Captain Campbell (Lord Cawdor), to impose on the French, while the divers trappings of the Volunteers, then as now so peculiar in their notions of uniform, gave the French invaders an exaggerated notion of the number of corps opposed to them.

Mr. Tate, however, determines not to be so easily beaten as his countrymen were on the memorable 23rd of February, 1797, and rather ungallantly for a Frenchman, ignores the prowess of the Welsh ladies, and the red petticoats altogether, and seems to think that neither their scarlet, nor even that of the Volunteers, really had the alarming

effect on the nerves of the invaders ascribed to them.

At this juncture a new version was given to the narrative by the testimony of Lord Cawdor (the son of the nobleman who, on that occasion distinguished himself), whose statement differs from both Mr. Tate's and Mr. Ridgway's. He states that 1200 or 1400 was the number of troops that landed, at Cerrig Gwasted Point, about three miles from Fishguard; that the ships that conveyed them sailed on the following day on receiving a signal from General Tate; and that there was "no question about a gale of wind."

The late Lord Cawdor then lived about thirty miles from the scene of action, and the Lord Lieutenant of the County (Lord Milford) being too infirm to take the command himself, desired Lord Cawdor to assume it. He collected all the military he could, principally volunteers, and advanced to Fishguard, where he arrived on Thursday evening, the enemy having landed on Tuesday. Shortly after his arrival, General Tate's aide-

de-camp brought the proposal to surrender, and on Friday the French laid down their arms. Lord Cawdor contradicts Mr. Ridgway as to the Welsh women being marshalled in their red whittles ; and adds, that his noble father " had neither time, opportunity, nor, I venture to say, inclination to form at such a moment a regiment of old women." From which we are to presume *all* the ladies on the Welsh mountains are old.

Whatever may be the correct story one fact is certain, that one portion of the expedition ran off in their frigates, leaving the other to get away in the best way they could, and that the latter undoubtedly surrendered.

It would seem that the only real engagement between the French and English, that resulted from the expedition, was that which has, upwards of sixty years afterwards, been fought out with so much spirit in " the Times" newspaper.

It is singular that neither party should have thought of appealing to the only authentic report on the subject, and which was con-

tained in a letter addressed by Lord Cawdor to the Duke of Portland (the then Secretary of State for the Home Department), and which appeared in the London Gazette of the 27th of February, 1797. As this letter is accompanied by copies of the letters sent by the French Commander offering to surrender, and Lord Cawdor's answer, we think it will be found of sufficient interest to be presented entire.

"LONDON GAZETTE EXTRAORDINARY.

Monday, Feb. 27, 1797.

"Whitehall, Feb. 27.

"A letter, of which the following is a copy, has been this day received from the Right Honble. Lord Cawdor by his Grace the Duke of Portland, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department.

"Fishguard, Feb. 24.

"MY LORD,

"In consequence of having received information on Wednesday night at 11 o'clock, that three large ships of war and a

lugger had anchored in a small roadstead upon this coast in the neighbourhood of this town, I proceeded immediately with a detachment of the Cardigan militia, and all the provincial force I could collect to the place. I soon gained positive intelligence they had disembarked about 1200 men, but no cannon. Upon the night's setting in a French officer, whom I found the second in command, came in with a letter, a copy of which I have the honour to inclose to your Grace, together with my answer : in consequence of which they determined to surrender themselves prisoners of war, and accordingly laid down their arms this day at 2 o'clock. I cannot at this moment inform your Grace of the exact number of prisoners, but I believe it to be their whole force. It is my intention to march them this night to Haverfordwest, where I shall make the best distribution in my power. The frigates, corvette, and lugger got under weigh yesterday evening, and were this morning entirely out of sight. The fatigue we have experienced will, I trust, excuse me to

your Grace for not giving a more particular detail : but my anxiety to do justice to the officers and men I had the honour to command will induce me to attend your Grace with as little delay as possible to state their merits, and at the same time to give you every information in my power upon this subject. The spirit of loyalty which has pervaded all ranks throughout this country is infinitely more than I express.

I am, &c.

“CAWDOR.”

“Cardigan Bay,

5th of Ventose, 5th year of the Republic.

“SIR,

“The circumstances under which the body of the French troops under my command were landed at this place renders it unnecessary to attempt any military operations, as they would only lead to bloodshed and pillage. The officers of the whole corps have therefore intimated their desire of entering into a negotiation upon principles of hu-

manity for a surrender. If you are influenced by similar considerations, you may signify the same by the bearer, and in the mean time hostilities shall cease.

“Health and respect,

“TATE,
Chef de Brigade.”

“To the Officer commanding His Britannic Majesty’s Troops.”

“Fishguard, Feb. 23.

“SIR,

“The superiority of the force under my command, which is hourly increasing, must prevent my treating upon any terms short of your surrendering your whole force prisoners of war. I enter fully into your wish of preventing an unnecessary effusion of blood, which your speedy surrender can alone prevent, and which will entitle you to that consideration, it is ever the wish of the British troops to show an enemy whose numbers are inferior. My Major will deliver you this letter, and I shall expect your determination

by 10 o'clock by your officer, whom I have furnished with an escort, that will conduct him to me without molestation.

“ I am, &c.

“ CAWDOR.”

“ To the Officer commanding the French troops.”*

On the 24th the Duke of Portland briefly communicated the intelligence to the Lord Mayor of London, and adds—“ Every exertion has been made by the Lord Lieutenant and gentlemen of that county and its neighbourhood, for taking the proper steps on this occasion ; and the greatest zeal and loyalty has been shown by all ranks of people. Immediately on an account having been received at Plymouth of this force having appeared in the British Channel, frigates were despatched from Plymouth in quest of them.”†

* “ Appendix to the Chronicle,” Annual Register, 1797, p. 72.

† Annual Register for 1798 ; Chronicle, p. 8.

We have bestowed more attention on this affair than perhaps it deserves, after such a length of time has elapsed since the perpetration of this outrage on our shores. The events, however, have a bearing on the present times. Contemptible as the projected invasion and miserable as its failure was, the revolution of years has worked other revolutions. The Welsh coasts are, in a great measure, as undefended now as they were in 1797. On no point of our shores could a hostile force land with greater effect than on the shores of Pembroke, Cardigan (where the descent was made), Merioneth and Caernarvon shires. In case of a repetition of so bold an attempt, there are no means of transporting troops, except by long and tedious marches, there being no railway communication from the extreme point of Pembrokeshire to the neighbourhood of Caernarvon, a distance of 150 miles. The resident population is sparsely scattered ; local corps are few and numerically small, and volunteer regiments are raised with difficulty. No doubt, at the

cry of danger, every Welshman will be found at the post of duty, and if necessary of danger ; but effectual resistance can only be made by the prompt arrival of trained troops, in co-operation with the inadequate local resources.

At the same time that our attention has been recalled to the danger on this part of our coast, we are gratified by the welcome intelligence, that extensive and most important fortifications are already in progress for the protection of the unrivalled harbour of Milford Haven and Pembroke Dockyard. On a very commanding situation, with an extensive range, a powerful battery is to be erected on the southern side of the haven ; and a formidable fortification, with a heavy armament, is being erected at Pepton Point, near Milford. Defensive works of the most efficient character, commanding the entrance of the harbour, are to be forthwith commenced. A battery is also to be erected near the signal station. The importance of Milford Haven, as the best harbour for com-

mercial or warlike purposes, have recently been most prominently brought before the public eye by Mr. THOMAS PAGE, the eminent Civil Engineer, in his "Report on the capability of Milford Haven, for Ocean Steamers, and for a Naval Arsenal." In case of war Milford would offer great advantages to commercial vessels, as they would avoid the risks of coast navigation, and its consequent openness to attack. Milford is also in the neighbourhood of many collieries, and coals could be put on board vessels cheaper and more expeditiously than at the other large ports of the southern or western coasts. Pembroke is distant eight miles from the sea, and with good batteries at the entrance of the harbour might be rendered perfectly secure from attack. In this respect it possesses far superior advantages to Portsmouth, Devonport, and Keyham harbours, which are all from one to two miles and a half only from deep water, and consequently exposed to being shelled, unless covered by a fleet.

The Admiralty appear to have been readily impressed by Mr. Page's striking and practicable views, and to have acted with great promptness.

CHAPTER IV.

Operations of the English in the West Indies—Attack and Surrender of Trinidad—Glorious engagement off Cape St. Vincent—Effect of the Victory—Dutch preparations against England—Battle of Camperdown—Signal Defeat of the Dutch—Rejoicings of the English people—The French Directory continues its Designs against us—Command of the Expedition given to Napoleon—His buccaneering style of Address.

THE year 1797 passed over without any other attack on our immediate coasts; but the French made several attempts to carry the war into the British dominions in Europe. On the other hand England was not slow in making reprisals, and her arms were successfully employed against the Spanish possessions in the West Indies. An expedition was planned against the important island of

Trinidad; the land forces being under the command of General Abercromby, and the naval under Admiral Harvey, whose squadron arrived on the 14th of February. The intended attack, however, was rendered useless, for on the night which preceded the morning on which it was to have been made, the Spanish ships took fire, and all were destroyed except one, which fell into our hands. General Abercromby having landed his forces, took the principal town with little opposition, and the Governor surrendered the whole island.

In other respects the aggressive operations of the French, as far as they were levelled against this country, were directed principally in making preparations, in their possessions in the West Indies, to attack that portion of our own which we had wrested from them, or their allies. These designs were however frustrated, numbers of the French armed vessels were taken, and little mischief was done to the English trade. Our successes by land and by sea were

equally great. Amongst the latter was the glorious engagement off Cape St. Vincent, under Admiral Jervis, in which our immortal Nelson (then Commodore) bore a triumphant part, and which ended in four of the Spanish vessels being taken, two of them carrying one hundred and twenty guns, one eighty-four, and the other seventy-four. The amount of slaughter on the part of the Spaniards was terrific, and the superiority of naval skill displayed under our flag struck all Europe with astonishment; the enemy being far superior in strength and number, and by no means contemptible in point of courage.

The Admiral was raised to the peerage under the title of Earl St. Vincent; in order that this splendid action, by which he won the honour, might be for ever associated with his name.

This great victory appears to have entirely disconcerted for the time the plan of operations by the three great powers arrayed against us, France, Spain and Holland. The naval

preparations of Holland were of extraordinary magnitude, and she was generally regarded by Europe as a more formidable rival to England, at sea, than the French. Under the prestige of their former achievements, the Batavian Republic had, with uncommon exertions and a vast expense, fitted out an armament, the destination of which was generally supposed to be Ireland. It consisted of four ships of seventy-four guns, five of sixty-eight, two of sixty-four, and four of fifty-six; they were all in the best condition for service; admirably manned, provided with everything requisite, and under the command of De Winter, an Admiral of acknowledged skill and intrepidity, and of tried republican principles.

The intention of the Batavian Government was that their noble armament should join the French fleet at Brest, which was assembled there for a renewed invasion of Ireland. The vigilance of the British cruisers, stationed along the Dutch coast, prevented this plan from being carried into

execution. In the hope of escaping the English squadron De Winter set sail, expecting that he might anticipate the return of Admiral Duncan, who was then in Yarmouth Roads, refitting his ships. But the latter, hearing the Dutch were out of port, sailed with all speed to meet them, and reached the coast of Holland on the 10th of October, and sighted them on the following day between Camperdown and Egmont. A remarkably obstinate and destructive engagement ensued ; but the fortune of the day was against the brave Dutch Admiral. He was compelled eventually to strike his flag, but not until all his masts were overboard, half his crew slain or wounded, and further resistance had become perfectly impossible, and victory was once more decided in favour of the British flag. Owing to the squadron having unavoidably drifted into shallow water during the course of the engagement, some of the Dutch squadron escaped, and but for that circumstance all would have been made prizes of. As it was, eight

ships of the line, two of fifty-six guns, and two frigates, were captured.

The loss on both sides was very heavy, the British numbered seven hundred, and the Dutch twice that number, and of the choicest of their seamen, killed and wounded. The English nation was intoxicated with joy at this splendid victory ; “ from the king on his throne to the very beggar in the street,” the most unqualified feeling of gratitude was manifested. The Admiral was also raised to the peerage, taking his title from the scene of his glorious triumph, and he lived to enjoy his well-merited fame until a very recent period.

Notwithstanding the two great victories of Admirals Jervis and Duncan, and the total annihilation of the ambitious projects of the French Directory, they still expressed the determination of trying the strength of England in England itself. By their inflammatory addresses and proclamations to their nation, they had stirred up a fire which they were unable to smother.

The harangues with which even the Great Napoleon stimulated the passions and excited the cupidity of his followers, resembled more closely the addresses of a brigand chief to his gang than that of a general of a civilized country to the troops under his command.

On the termination of the peace negotiations with Lord Malmesbury, and the intention of again invading England being proclaimed, the command, as we have already seen, of the expedition was given to Bonaparte, who, at a general review of his troops, announced to them his design of meeting them on the shores of the Channel—"You have given peace to the Continent," said he, "and Great Britain is our only remaining enemy. *I will lead you to London, whose cellars are filled with gold and silver.* You shall then return to France, loaded with guineas, which you shall spend at home with your mistresses. Long live the Republic!" The troops, however, re-echoing his words, uttered, to his

great delight, a general shout of "Long live Bonaparte!"

We must, however, again contemplate the position of our foe at this period.

CHAPTER V.

Formidable Position of France in 1798—Political Changes in Europe—Switzerland subdued—Subjugation of Spain—Annexation of the Low Countries—French successes in Austria and the Italian States—Similarity of the former with the present state of Europe—The Invasion of England is again revived—The French people instigated in every way against us—Infamous Calumnies spread abroad—The Marquis Cornwallis' apprehensions—Essex in a state of danger—The Progress and Suppression of the Irish Rebellion—Arrival of a French Force at Killala Bay under General Humbert—Defeat of the English under General Lake—Version of the affair from the Marquis Cornwallis' Despatches.

THE year 1798 found France in a truly formidable and alarming position to the rest of the Continent. She had, in the early part of the year, added Rome and Switzerland to her conquests, and was organizing plans for their future dependence. The political situation of Europe had undergone a

most thorough change. Switzerland, a country long reputed invincible, through the strength of its natural means of defence, had been subdued after three severe actions, and a decisive battle fought under the walls of Berne, on the 5th of March, and its heroic inhabitants were pillaged, and its conquerors guilty of fearful excesses. Spain, although not actually conquered, had been compelled to accept of a peace dictated by the victors, and was, in fact, a province of the French Republic, and, as we have seen, a mere instrument in its hands. The seventeen Provinces of the Low Countries, at one time the most important and flourishing in Europe, had become annexed to France; she had just concluded an advantageous peace with Austria; and Italy, called by its own people "the burying ground of the French armies," had witnessed the humiliation of all its princes and states, and was the theatre of its conqueror's greatest victories. The aristocracies of Venice and Genoa had become completely annihilated.

The spacious and fertile provinces of Lombardy now were, although a republic in name, under the control of France. The kingdom of Sardinia and the Grand Duke of Tuscany hardly retained anything more than their titles, while the position of the kingdom of Naples was a mere semblance of sovereignty. It is not our province to draw parallels between that and the present state of Europe ; but, most unquestionably, there is an ominous similarity in the most striking of their respective features.

While the spirit of her continental neighbours was broken by the success of her arms, France was in proportionate elation of insolent and overbearing triumph.

England was however yet unsubdued, and its independence was the more irritating to France, on account of the ancient rivalry that had from the earliest times existed between the two countries. It was with feelings of unmitigated aversion, and intense mortification that France, after having put its mailed foot on nearly the whole of Europe,

found that our insignificant island should hold out. Not only did England hold out, but she obstructed the designs, and set bounds to the ambition of her grasping rival.

After the success of the decisive battle of Berne, the invasion of this country became again the ostensible aim and object of France. The feasibility of the attempt, and the justice of it, had been so frequently impressed on the mind of the French people during the preceding twelvemonths, that the nation began to feel it had a right to be disappointed at its not being accomplished. Nothing was omitted on the part of the French Government to impress on the minds of the people, that this attempt would seriously be made, and that in a manner to secure success. Preparations were going forward in every seaport, transport ships were brought into them; the best troops were selected from the different armies, under the command of the most successful generals, and the necessary number of seamen were procured. The General who was to conduct the expedition, visited each

harbour whence the troops were to embark, and was in active communication with all who could give counsel in order to secure the safety and speed of the passage, and the favourable landing of the troops. Forty millions by way of loan was proposed to be raised, and the most cautious of all men, the Bankers of Paris, subscribed for the amount amongst themselves, and professed their willingness to wait for payment, until they could be reimbursed out of the spoils of England! The genius of the most inventive artists was stimulated by the promise of princely rewards to contribute their aid to the success of the enterprise; the newspaper and periodical press teemed with pleasantries and jokes upon the anticipated downfall of England; and that no class might be left uninfluenced, the Minister of the Interior directed a musical composition called "The Vengeance of France upon England," to be performed nightly at each of the theatres.

As if these means were not sufficient to instigate the French people against their

neighbours, still fouler expedients were adopted. Murders and robberies were alarmingly on the increase, and the very centre of French society appeared to be shaken by their frequent recurrence. The Minister of the Police found this too good an opportunity of blackening an enemy, that could not be beaten, and he accordingly addressed a circular letter to the various districts in the Republic, in which he explicitly charged the English with keeping in pay the gangs of murderers and miscreants by whom these outrages were perpetrated. "*Trembling*," he said, "*at the army of heroes* which was preparing to land upon the English shore and to revenge the injuries done to France, those perfidious islanders were using every atrocious means to divert the storm that was threatening them, and filling every part of the Republic with blood and civil broils, in order to keep the French employed at home."

For the same base purpose of inflaming the French population against the English, reports were spread that an attempt had been

made by their emissaries to poison Bonaparte, and that General Hoche had also perished by the same "perfidious islanders."

The object of the Directory was palpable, it was the severing of the kingdom of Ireland from its allegiance to the throne of England. This had been always a favourite idea of France. A century previously she had made the same attempt to dismember that island from our dominions, and to erect a new sovereignty over it, from the expelled House of the Stuarts.

In a letter dated 23rd February, 1798, the Marquis Cornwallis writes to the Duke of Wellington, (whom he addresses as "The Hon. Col. Wesley,")—"We are now brought to the state to which I have long since looked forward, deserted by our allies and in daily expectation of invasion, for which the French are making the most serious preparations. I have no doubt of the courage or fidelity of our militia, but the system of David Dundas, and the total want of light infantry sit heavy on my mind; and point

out the advantages which the activity of the French will have in a country which is for the most part enclosed.”*

While Ireland still continued a tempting object for attack, our own immediate coasts appeared to be in equal danger.

In a subsequent letter, dated March 26, 1798, to Sir William Howe, the Marquis Cornwallis expresses his approbation of a plan that the latter had submitted to the Duke of York, then the Commander-in-Chief, with respect to the distribution of troops at Ipswich, Colchester, and Chelmsford, and considers a large body of infantry (30,000 had been suggested) with a considerable corps of light infantry, was essentially necessary for the defence of Essex, which at that time was considered in the height of peril.†

Although the disaffected in Ireland were numerous and most determined, yet they soon

* Marquis Cornwallis' Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 333.

† Marquis Cornwallis' Correspondence, by Rose, vol. ii. p. 333.

discovered that they had not the warm ally in the Republic they had imagined. The subjugation of Ireland rather than her independence seemed now to be the price to be paid for assistance. The Irish demanded troops to the extent of ten thousand men only, but France considered less than fifty thousand would be useless.

A general insurrection for the purpose of facilitating the French invasion, was now resolved upon by the Irish insurgents; but differences arose amongst themselves, which led to the apprehension of some of the leaders of the rebel-party, particularly the brothers Sheares, who subsequently paid their lives as a forfeit. Operations were, however, commenced, and after engagements, with varied results, the insurgents were attacked on the 21st of June on their principal station at Vinegar Hill, near Eniscorthy, where they were defeated after a vigorous resistance, and the rebellion suppressed in the south of Ireland. A numerous force had been also totally defeated in the north, on the 12th of June, at Ballinacinch.

At this juncture, attempts were made by the French to rekindle the flame of rebellion which had been almost extinguished in Ireland. The means, however, adopted by them, were neither well timed, nor well conceived, nor of sufficient magnitude to render success at all probable.

After the magniloquent addresses and proclamations of liberating Ireland from her yoke, and of reducing England to submit to any terms that her magnanimous conquerors might condescend to concede to her, it seems rather absurd that these grand results were to be accomplished by the means which we have to narrate. There was a sonorous blast of trumpets, sounding notes of defiance, but the next descent and the last that was actually made, was on a scale more fitted to excite ridicule than terror.

On the 21st of August (the official report gives the date as the 22nd) three French frigates, unaccompanied by any transports, appeared in the bay of Killala, where about 700 men, under the command of General

Humbert, landed. They immediately took possession of the town, and made a small party of the Prince of Wales' Fencibles, consisting of an officer and twenty men only, prisoners. The French then proceeded to Castlebar, being joined by a few of the country people. They here attacked Lieutenant-General Lake, in a position he had taken, before his force could be collected, and compelled him to retire. The despatch of Lord Castlereagh, then Secretary of Ireland, does not state the number of General Lake's force, but it has been stated from three to six times the amount of the French. The despatch admits that the General left behind him six pieces of cannon, but that his loss of men was not considerable.

After this achievement, which we must acknowledge was in every respect a brilliant one on the part of the invaders, and worthy of an attack of a less predatory character, they advanced upon Tuam.

The above details are copied from the "Annual Register" of the year, and they

afford no intelligible explanation, how such a contemptible handful of invaders, could conquer a body of trained troops on their own ground. Fortunately for the honour of this country we are able to arrive at the truth by the recent publication of "the Civil Correspondence" of the Marquis Cornwallis, who had in the month of June previously been nominated to discharge a double duty, by uniting the civil and military authority in Ireland. On his accession to office and command he was armed with extensive powers, and authorised to grant an amnesty almost upon any terms he chose, as far as possible to repress the spirit of vengeance so generally engendered by civil war.*

From the original documents now made public, we are able to give a version of the events we are speaking of, more consistent with our own national honour.

The following is an extract from one of the despatches :—

* Marquis Cornwallis' Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 349.

"The following day the intelligence that the French, under General Humbert, had landed in Killala Bay, reached Dublin. Lord Cornwallis was well aware that he could not confide in all the regiments under his command, and feared that a defeat might occasion a general insurrection; he determined to assemble an efficient force before he attacked the French. The first rumours of their strength were greatly exaggerated; the whole corps, as it afterwards appeared, not exceeding 1100, of whom not one ultimately escaped. Some were killed in action, 96 officers and 746 rank and file surrendered at Ballynainch, and the remainder were captured at Killala and other places.

"The original plan of the French Directory had been to effect landings at several points, and by distracting the attention of Government to facilitate the rising in various parts of the country which they had been taught to anticipate. But the arrest of the rebel leaders, and the energy of the Irish Government, had put an end to the rebellion,

and the want of money, arms, ammunition, and ships, delayed the sailing of the French fleet. Urged on at last by the rash impatience of Napper Tandy, Humbert, without waiting for orders, obtained from La Rochelle a small sum of money by military requisition, and about the middle of August sailed with three frigates and a few transports. He was accompanied by Matthew Tone (brother of Theobald Wolfe Tone), Teeling, and Sullivan. Tandy and some others followed in the *Anacreon*, and reached the northern coast of Ireland about the middle of September. Hearing that Humbert had surrendered, they did not land, but returned immediately to France.” *

Teeling and Tone were afterwards tried and executed; Sullivan was captured, but was not recognised.†

A more circumstantial account is given in a letter from Edward Cooke, Esq. to Wil-

* Marquis Cornwallis' Correspondence, by Rose, vol. ii. p. 289.

† Ibid. notes.

liam Wickham, Esq. (one of the Government officials). "The French had advanced to Ballina. There are two roads to Castlebar, one by Foxford, where part of our force, was stationed to check them; the other a mountain road.

"General Hutchinson was with about 1500 men at Castlebar, and he had settled the ground on which he meant to resist the attack. On the 26th at twelve at night, General Lake joined him. At five in the morning of the 27th the report came in that the French were advancing by the mountain road. The position was immediately occupied. Between six and seven the French appeared. They came on in three columns of near 800 each, as they had armed many of the country people, and with two curricule guns. They advanced with rapidity, firing their cannons obliquely on all parts of our line. Their fire was returned with much effect by our artillery, which did execution. The French continued advancing, and began a rapid charge with the bayonet in very loose

order. At this moment the Galway Volunteers, the Kilkenny and Longford Militia ran away. Lord Ormonde exerted himself to stop his men; he first begged and beseeched; he then upbraided and swore at them; he ran two of them through the body, and burst into tears. Lord Granard in vain exerted himself with the Longford—they behaved as ill. The 6th regiment of 120 men, and the Frasers behaved well, and had the rest done the same the day had been completely ours. One of the French columns made for our flank, which I suppose first disconcerted the militia. I hear from a person who was prisoner with the French troops, that had our troops sustained the attack for a minute longer, the French would have turned about."

Mr. Cooke then states that there was disaffection in the two militia regiments, many if not most of them were Catholics and United Irishmen. "They are both fine regiments in appearance, fine men and well drilled, capable in point of body, youth, and agility,

and *habileté* to face any troops. I am confident treachery will come out.”*

A letter written by General Lake to the Marquis Cornwallis, dated “Tuam, Aug. 28, 1798, 5 o’clock, A. M.” gives some further particulars of the circumstances which led to his defeat.

“I think it is absolutely necessary to state for your Lordship’s information that it is impossible to manage the militia; their whole conduct has been this day of action most shameful, and I am sorry to say there is a strong appearance of disaffection particularly in the Kilkenny, as Lord Ormonde has reported to me. His Lordship’s conduct has been most meritorious, but his men are not obedient to his orders. The Louth regiment are well disposed, and in good order.

“I have thought it necessary to march for this place (Tuam) in hopes the soldiers will get the better of their panic, which is beyond description, and I hope in a day or two they

* Marquis Cornwallis’ Correspondence, p. 393.

may forget it ; whence their behaviour proceeds I am at a loss to guess.

“I have every reason to apprehend the people of the country are flocking into the French army very fast, which will not be prevented unless they are beat shortly, which I should think might easily be done with any troops than those I have to deal with.”*

Mr. Cooke afterwards, on the 1st of Sept. writes that General Lake's secretary states that he considers the French to have amounted to 800. “They advanced in an excellent style, with great rapidity, as sharpshooters. Had our line been steady, all was right ; but when the French were 150 yards off, the Longford began running off, and then the Kilkenny, &c., and there was no possibility of rallying. The men totally indifferent to their officers, and so shameful a route he never saw.”†

Such was the first temporary success of this daring attack, and the circumstances

* Marquis Cornwallis' Correspondence, p. 391.

† Ibid. vol. 2.

which led to its success. However it was a very transient one. The Marquis Cornwallis, acting on General Lake's information that the enemy would probably march to Boyle, or Carrick on Shannon, proceeded himself to the latter place, and gave orders to Major-General Moore to be prepared at Boyle.

On the Marquis' arrival at Carrick he found the enemy had passed the Shannon at Balintra, where they attempted to destroy the bridge, but which General Lake prevented.

It appears from the despatch of General Lake to the Lord-Lieutenant, that he made ample amends for his former defeat, by compelling the surrender of the invading force.

After the "French army," as the despatch designates this handful of men, had left Castlebar, the General followed them, and aided by Lieutenant-Colonel Crawford being so close upon their rear, as to give them no chance of escape, "although they drove the country, and carried with them all the horses."

The General's column consisted of the Carabineers, detachments of the 23rd Light Dragoons, the 3rd battalion of the Light Infantry, a portion of the Kerry Militia, the Reay, and Prince of Wales' Fencibles. After four days and nights of most severe marching, the General arrived at Cloone on the morning of the 8th of September.

At the same time Colonel Crawford came up with the French rear-guard, and summoned them to surrender ; but as they did not do so, he attacked them, and two hundred of the French infantry threw down their arms. Under the impression that the rest of the corps would follow their example, General Craddock and Captain Paddock rode up to them. They were, however, received by a fire of cannon and musketry, by which General Craddock was wounded. The General (Lake) then ordered up the third battalion of Light Infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Innes, and commenced an attack on the enemy's position. The action lasted upwards of half an hour, when the remainder of the

column coming up, the French surrendered at discretion ; the Irish who had joined them suffered severely ; ninety-six were taken prisoners, some killed, and the survivors fled in all directions. The part of the Armagh militia which was engaged is reported to have behaved most gallantly. The enemy, in their retreat before General Lake, were compelled to abandon nine pieces of cannon, which they had taken in the former engagement with the king's troops. A considerable quantity, for so small a force as the aggressing party, of ordnance, arms and ammunition were also taken from them, (proving they expected to be joined in great force by the Irish); these included three light French 4-pounders, five French waggons nearly full of made up ammunition, 700 stands of arms, and a great number of pikes.

In the "General Orders" of the Lord-Lieutenant after this engagement, he makes mention of the assistance he received from the yeomanry corps, in the whole country through which the king's troops passed, and

which rendered the greatest services, "and are peculiarly entitled to the acknowledgment of the Lord-Lieutenant, from their not having tarnished that courage and loyalty which they displayed in the cause of their king and country by any acts of wanton cruelty towards their deluded fellow subjects."*

The loss of our troops was insignificant; one officer (Lieutenant Stephens, of the Carabineers) was wounded, three privates killed, twelve wounded, and three missing.

The number of French prisoners comprised the whole force left alive; the returns of the killed and wounded (if any) are not given in the despatch. There were taken—

General and other officers	.	96
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Non-commissioned officers and		
soldiers	.	746

Horses, about	.	100
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N.B. Ninety-six rebels taken, three of them called General Officers, by the names of Roach, Blake, and Teeling.

* Annual Register for 1798, "Appendix to Chronicle," p. 141.

“ * * * The enemy in their retreat before the troops under my command, were compelled to abandon nine pieces of cannon, which they had taken in the former action with his Majesty’s forces.” *

Amongst the prisoners were Humbert, General en chef; Sarazin, the General of division; Fontaine, the General of brigade; and about nineteen other officers high in command.

Of Humbert, the commander, we have the following particulars. He is described “ as a man of low extraction, coarse and profligate in his manners, and cruel in his character. By his licentiousness he afterwards incurred the enmity of Bonaparte. He was second in command to Hoche, and was at Bantry. He said that 200 of the Longford and Kilkenny at one time joined them, but they all deserted from them except about sixty. He said the country people were very ill behaved, came in, got arms and clothes and run away, and that

* From Lieutenant-General Lake’s Despatch. Annual Register (1798), “Appendix to Chronicle,” p. 141.

their sole object was plunder: the French shot two of them. He praised Colonel Crawford much for the manner he harassed them. He said the Limerick militia behaved gallantly at Coloone, but were ill posted and ill conducted.

He thought the French brought clothing and arms for about 4000; only five 4-pounders, and a good deal of ammunition. It does not appear that the French had any money; they had some brass and paper, but little gold or silver.*

The termination of the rebellion, and with it the intended attack on Ireland for that year, followed in the course of the next month.

On the 11th of October, a French squadron, consisting of the *Hoche*, a ship of the line, and eight frigates with arms and ammunition destined for Ireland, were taken or dispersed by Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren. With the exception of two fri-

* Marquis Cornwallis' Correspondence, vol. 2, p. 402.

gates which regained the ports of the Republic, the whole squadron fell ultimately into our hands. Amongst the prisoners taken in the Hoche was the great agitator, Wolfe Tone, who, being tried and condemned, hastened out of life by a voluntary death, "accompanied with more than ordinary circumstances of horror." *

Holt, the famous rebel leader, surrendered himself to the English Government, and no other leader remained to be subdued; "and thus, through the vigilance, sagacity, and seasonable vigour of the British administration, of whom it is but justice to say that their moderation and humanity were equal to their activity and abilities, an end was put to the rebellion." †

The attitude of England at this period (1798) excited the highest admiration throughout Europe. "In the British Cabinet there was then to be seen neither irresolution nor discouragement; no symptom

* Alison, *History of Europe*, vol. vi. p. 213.

† *Annual Register* (1798), p. 165.

of that cruel perplexity which tormented the continental sovereigns. In vain were the efforts of the Directory turned against that point of the globe, which they assailed with all their weapons, both military and revolutionary. England sustained the shock with daily increasing energy. Her dignity was untouched; her arms unconquered. The most terrible war to which an empire could be exposed, there produced less anxiety, troubles and disquietude, than was experienced in those states which had been seduced by a prospect of a fallacious peace to come to terms of accommodation with the French Republic. It was with 800 ships of war, 150,000 sailors, 300,000 land troops, and an expenditure of fifty millions sterling a year, that she maintained the contest. It was by periodical victories of unprecedented splendour, by drawing closer together the bonds of her constitution, that she replied to all the efforts of France to dismember her dominions. But never did she run greater danger than this year, when one expedition

directed against the East, threatened with destruction her Indian empire ; and another against the West, was destined to carry into Ireland the principles of the French revolution, and sever that important island from the British Empire." *

* Prince Hardenberg, vol. vi. p. 197, 198, cited in Alison's Europe, vol. vi. p. 214.

CHAPTER VI.

English apprehensions of Invasion—Extensive preparations against it—The design abandoned, and the Expedition to Egypt substituted—Sails from Toulon—Splendour of the Armament—Its understood object—Napoleon's address to the army—Malta taken—The English fleet under Nelson—Battle of the Nile—Expedition to Syria—Capitulation of El-Arish—Atrocious massacre of the garrison of Jaffa—Message to Ghezzar Bashaw and his noble answer—The siege of Acre—Overthrow of Napoleon's mighty design—Return to France—Made First Consul—Makes overtures of peace to England—Again prepares for invasion—England adopts vigorous means of defence—Becomes offensive in its operation—Nelson sails from Deal—Arrives off and attacks Boulogne—Negotiations for Peace—Peace of Amiens.

THE British government, although not dreading the result of a contest which would

be determined on its own immediate shores, could not but feel apprehensive in respect to Ireland. The disaffected of which country were still in communication with the French Directory. The Ministers were also fully acquainted with the mighty preparations which were going on in so many hostile quarters, but at the same time ignorant which was to be the actual point of attack. Every arrangement, which prudence could suggest, or activity carry into effect, was accomplished. The vigilance of the cruisers in the Channel was increased, and the most active measures of defence were taken on our coasts. "From Caithness to Kent and Cornwall the united nations were in arms. Internal conspiracies were quashed, and all hearts and hands were united in defiance of the French ;"* the spirit of the nation rose with the dangers that threatened it, and she beheld without dismay, and with an elevated courage, the preparations that were made to crush her. The opposition in Parliament magnanimously

* Annual Register (1798), p. 132.

determined at the present crisis to support the Government, and thus for a time the voice of party strife was hushed in the councils of the nation, through the grander consideration of the safety of the common country.

The French Directory, however, suspended the project against England for a time, although the preparations were apparently continued for a considerable period after it had been virtually laid aside. Another design was to be substituted in lieu of the invasion, and which "was to shake all Europe with astonishment."

The object of this new project was at first profoundly concealed; but Bonaparte, who was to have had the command of "The Army of England," was entrusted with that of the secret expedition, the destination of which subsequently appeared to be Egypt.

On the 19th of May, 1798, the French fleet under General Bonaparte sailed from Toulon. It consisted of thirteen ships of the line, of which one carried a hundred and twenty guns, three eighty, and nine seventy-four, besides

seven frigates, and several smaller vessels, making altogether forty-four sail. There were also about two hundred transports carrying 20,000 men, regular troops, and sixteen thousand others, and upwards of ten thousand sailors. There were also a proportionate number of horses and artillery, and an immense quantity of provisions and military stores. To give a still grander aspect to the expedition, a considerable body of artists, and scientific men of all denominations — astronomers, geometers, chemists, mineralogists, botanists, physicians and linguists.* It was unquestionably the largest armament France had ever equipped on a distant expedition, and altogether never had so splendid a one appeared on the ocean.

Malta and Egypt were generally considered the principal objects of the expedition; the riches of the one were to replenish the resources of the Republic, while the acquisition of the latter would enable France to intercept the trade of England in India, even at that

* Annual Register (1798), p. 123.

time one of its principal sources of commercial wealth, and naval grandeur.

The Anglo-India power was, according to the conjectures of many, the aim and object of this formidable armament.

The following characteristic proclamation, Napoleon addressed to the troops, previous to their embarkation :

“ Soldiers !

“ You are one of the wings of the Army of England, you have made war in mountains, plains, and cities ; it remains to make it on the ocean. The Roman legions whom you have often imitated, but not yet equalled, combated Carthage by turns on the seas and on the plains of Zama. Victory never deserted their standards, because they never ceased to be brave, patient, and united. Soldiers ! the eyes of Europe are upon you ; you have great destinies to accomplish ; battles to fight ; dangers and fatigues to overcome : you are about to do more than you have yet done for the prosperity of your country, the happiness of man, and your own

glory. The genius of liberty, which has rendered, from its birth, the Republic the arbiter of Europe, has now determined that it shall become so of the seas, and of the most distant nations." *

In the finest weather, amidst the discharges of cannon, and the acclamations of an immense crowd of the inhabitants, the fleet set sail. As they coasted the shores of Italy, and beheld the snowy summits of the Alps in the distance, Napoleon gazed with exultation on those magnificent witnesses of his early and most brilliant achievements. During the voyage he conversed freely, and with animation, as each headland and promontory recalled the places where he had so often led his troops to victory, or brought back the memories of ancient glory.

On the 8th of June, after a splendid voyage, the white cliffs of Malta were sighted; and on the 10th the troops landed and advanced to the ramparts without opposition, and before a shot was fired, the town

* Alison, Hist. Europe, vol. vi. p. 243.

was surrendered, "and the tri-colour waved on the ancient bulwark of the Christian world." *

Thus was this impregnable island, as it was considered, made an easy conquest of by Napoleon ; more, however, by internal divisions and intrigues, than any incapability of offering effectual resistance. No sooner had the terms of accommodation been agreed on and the gates delivered up, than the plunder commenced. "The treasure of St. John, the accumulation of ages, the silver plate of all the churches, palaces, and hospitals were seized with merciless avidity," and all the ships of war, artillery, and arsenals of the order, appropriated to the uses of the Directory. †

This was what Napoleon meant by securing "the happiness of man," and "the prosperity" of France ; by ruthlessly plundering the one, to relieve the necessities of the other.

Leaving a sufficient garrison at this

* Ibid.—But the dates given by Alison are different.

† Ibid.—246.

splendid acquisition, Napoleon sailed for Egypt, the shores of which the expedition saw on the 1st of July.

In the same month the army arrived within sight of the Pyramids and Cairo. As the army gazed on these gigantic structures, Napoleon, inspired with more than his usual ardour, addressed to them those immortal words, "Remember that from the summits of these pyramids forty centuries contemplate your actions."

In the meantime, the fleet under Nelson (then Sir Horatio) had arrived (on the 20th of June) before Naples, and the Admiral having subsequently heard of the surrender of Malta, steered for Alexandria, which he reached on the 29th, and found that not a ship of the enemy had been seen there. The British squadron then proceeded to Rhodes. While in these latitudes the two fleets were within a few leagues of each other for several hours, each unconscious of the other's neighbourhood.

On the 1st of August the memorable battle of the Nile was fought, which ended

The old man sent a verbal reply: "I have not written to you because I am resolved not to hold any communication with you. You may march against Acre when you please. I shall be prepared for you, and will bury myself in the ruins of the place rather than it shall fall into your hands."*

We question whether the annals of any country, boast a more heroic, and yet more simple reply.

Late in the evening of the 17th, the French army, consisting of 16,000 picked men, arrived at the mouth of the little river of Acre, over which the whole army passed at the break of the following day, by means of a bridge which they had constructed in the course of the night, and encamped upon an insulated eminence, that was near and parallel to the sea. On the 20th, the trenches were opened.

Timely notice, however, of the approach of Bonaparte was given to Commodore Sir Sidney Smith, on whom the command of

* Annual Register (1799), p. 26.

the British naval force, in the Archipelago had devolved.

On the 15th of March, Sir Sydney steered for Acre, and on the following day, fell in with the French flotilla, under the command of Eydoun, laden with cannon, consisting of forty-four pieces, ammunition, and other materials necessary for the siege. This artillery, the gallant Commadore immediately mounted on the ramparts of Acre, and directed the guns and vessels against the batteries and the lines of the enemy whose operations it was intended to accomplish, instead of thus frustrating.

After a siege of sixty days, during which the French made twelve unsuccessful assaults, baffled by the British squadron on the waters, and the Turks on shore, and all hopes of success having vanished, their commander relinquished his attempt, and on the 20th of May, "Napoleon for the first time in his life ordered a retreat."*

* Alison's Europe, vol. vi. p. 302; and see an animated account of this memorable siege in the Annual Register (1799), pp. 26, 38.

Thus were Napoleon's dreams of oriental conquest dissipated—three thousand of his bravest troops slain, or dead of their wounds, a still greater number were irrecoverably mutilated; and harder fate than all to bear—his arms, glorious as their successes had been, were proved not to be invincible.

Nothing could be more magnificent than the anticipations of Napoleon in taking Acre; he expected by that event to have secured Egypt; to have arrived at Constantinople with armed masses, overturn the Turkish empire, establish a new one in the East; and after annihilating the House of Austria, return by Adrianople and Vienna to Paris.*

"I would have reached Constantinople and the Indies; I would have changed the face of the world,"† were Napoleon's own words, after the lapse of twenty years, while wearing out the remainder of his days at St. Helena—to Sir Sydney Smith he paid

* Bourrienne Private Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte, vol. ii. pp. 243, 244.

† Las Casas, vol. 1.

the immortal but bitter compliment, "That man made me miss my destiny."

It was through an act of courtesy of Sir Sydney, that Napoleon received intelligence that made him resolve to return to Europe. After the battle of Aboukir, Napoleon went again to Alexandria, and Sir Sydney, having to arrange an exchange of prisoners, sent a flag of truce, with a file of English newspapers to him. Through the information afforded by them, Napoleon became acquainted with the disasters, which had been experienced by the Directory in the conquest of Italy, the reverses in the Alps, and the retreat at Zurich, all of which had occurred in his absence. All prospect of great success in Egypt was now at an end, and leaving long and minute instructions with Kleber, to whom he entrusted the command of the army, he took what might be truly called "French leave" of it, and secretly set sail for France. On his voyage he narrowly escaped falling into the hands of his foe, in the shape of an English fleet of fourteen sail. His Admiral

(Gantheaume) proposed to return to Corsica, which they had quitted the previous day. "No!" replied Napoleon, "Spread every sail; every man to his post; steer for the north-west." By this prompt advice, the ships were saved; the English little aware of what a glorious prize was within their grasp. Upon what trifling events do the destinies of the world often hang! but for those unpremeditated words—sixteen years of bloodshed, millions of lives, and all the horrors of a protracted war would in all probability have been saved.

On the 8th of October, the long expected mountains of Provence appeared, and the frigates anchored in the bay of Frejus; and in a few hours Napoleon landed, and on the same day was on the road to Paris.

We must pass over without a glance intervening events, and only mention briefly the subsequent deposition of the Directory by Napoleon, and his placing himself at the head of the French nation, under the title of First Consul, on the 9th of November, 1799.

One of the earliest acts of Napoleon, after his overthrow of the French Directory, was on the 1st day of the year 1800, to make overtures of peace to England, but which were rejected. He then renewed his preparations for an invasion of this country with greater apparent earnestness than he had hitherto yet exhibited. England on her part, took the most energetic measures for her defence. In addition to a regular force of 300,000, besides those to which our domestic defence was entrusted, we had 70,000 trained militia, and 300,000 volunteers. The military ardour shewn by the English people was undaunted ; they were perfectly ready in defence of their homes and institutions to meet the victor of Marengo and Austerlitz.

The French and English were thus keeping each other in check ; a mighty force was collected on either side of the Channel, which was covered by our ships of war, along the whole extent of coast, upon which the enemy might carry his threats of invasion into execution.

It became now advisable to change the course of tactics; our shores had been desecrated by the invader's foot, and his menaces of future violation could no longer be treated with mere resistance. The nature of a war merely defensive was despiriting both to the army and to the people, while it afforded the enemy the choice of his time and place of attack. England had hitherto acted simply on the defensive, but she now boldly, and as subsequent events shewed wisely, determined to put herself in an offensive attitude. At the very time that the fresh project of invasion seemed ripe for execution, instead of waiting for the attack on ourselves, we prepared to attack the foe. A flotilla of gun boats, and other armed vessels, backed by some ships of the line, was placed under the command of Lord Nelson, (who had been ennobled after the battle of the Nile) with the design of visiting the shores of France, with the very terrors she had so openly designed for our own side. We could at this time with the help of telescopes, see from Dover the French encamp-

ments on the coasts of Picardy, while from the latter, our own troops could by the same means be observed by the enemy.

The plan of attack is said to have been suggested by Nelson himself to Lord St. Vincent, and it seems to possess that rare combination of profound wisdom, with a boldness akin to rashness which characterised the genius of England's most illustrious Sea-Captain. And it would seem to have been successful in its design of giving the French enough to do to take care of themselves. Instead of proceeding with their preparations against us, France was sufficiently occupied in preparing for her own defence. As we had become offensive from being defensive, so our enemy became defensive from being offensive. At Boulogne, Dunkirk, Dieppe, Havre and Cherbourg, and other places open to attack, land forces were collected, batteries constructed, and furnaces erected for the manufacture of red hot shot. France had now to share in the same perplexity and alarm she had so long caused

her foe, by not knowing the particular point that might be selected for attack.

The 30th of July, 1801, was a memorable one in our annals. On that day Lord Nelson hoisted his flag on board the *Leyden* (which he afterwards shifted to the *Medusa*) and took the command of the armament on an unknown expedition, and sailed from Deal. His force consisted of the flag-ship the *Leyden* of 68 guns, the *De Ruyter* of 64 guns, the *Isis* of 50, the *Hind* and *Brilliant* frigates, with a great number of bombs, and gun-boats, revenue cutters, and armed pinaces, in all comprehending about forty sail.

On Monday, the 3rd of August, our armament having arrived off Boulogne, it was resolved to make that stronghold of the French the place of attack. It was there, on either side of the town, that the extensive encampments were formed, and in the harbour were assembled the numerous gun and flat-bottomed boats intended for the invasion of this country, strengthened by a flotilla from Calais, consisting of six gun-brigs, four luggers, and two schooners.

It seems that the first intention of our great commander was to attack the enemy's vessels with bombs only, but it being difficult to discover their batteries, he ordered his principal ships close up to the shore, in their very face. The English saluted them with a couple of broadsides, which were replied to by the French; but the position of our vessels was so well chosen, that the batteries could not bear upon them, and their firing could not reach our bomb vessels. The batteries being found to be useless, others were promptly erected with earthworks, but with no better effect; only a few shells told.

The English admiral's object was to make all the French ships retreat into the mouth of the harbour, so that being in a cluster their destruction might easily have been effected. The wind was at first favourable to this manœuvre, and six of the enemy's vessels were so much damaged by the shells thrown from ours, that they were towed off from the scene of action. Five got into the mole, four sunk, and one bulged. The wind,

however, shifting, rendered the attack impracticable, without the utmost danger, and Lord Nelson was obliged to haul off. No life was lost, and only two of our men wounded. The result of this bold attempt is modestly given by England's hero in his despatches, that "it would serve to convince the enemy that they could not come out of their harbour with impunity." *

After making the feint of an attack on Flushing, or some other port on the Dutch coast, Lord Nelson made another attack on Boulogne between the 15th and 16th of August, with even greater daring, but with no more successful result, involving a loss of killed and wounded of 172 men. We were received "by forests of cutlasses and bayonets; volleys of musketry and grape shot poured on our men." It is said, to the honour of the French Commodore, on the crew of the first of our boats approaching his vessel, that he addressed them, in tolerable English, thus: "Let me advise you, my

* Annual Register (1801), p. 268.

brave Englishmen, to keep your distance. You can do nothing here, and it is only uselessly shedding the blood of brave men to make the attempt." *

The roar of artillery, both at sea and at land, during the tremendous engagements at Boulogne, was distinctly heard on the English side of the Channel. The whole of the action on the 3rd of August was witnessed by spectators on the high ground surrounding Boulogne; while thousands of people covered the heights around Dover. The day being clear, the greater part of our ships and the firing from the French was also visible; and it was the first engagement between the two rival nations, of any importance, that was witnessed from the shores of both countries. Not only was it the first, but we trust it will be the last!

The English commander, after this brave, but upon the whole, fruitless attempt, on the Sunday following returned with part of his fleet to Deal.

* Ibid. 272.

Although further preparations were made on either side of the Channel for the defence of the coasts, and a show was still kept up of invasion, negotiations for peace were set on foot, and Mr. Merry was sent to Paris as an agent for this country. The negotiation, which had been continued for nearly nine months, between M. Otto on the part of France, and Lord Hawkesbury, then Secretary of State for the Home Department, was at last brought to a conclusion; and in a "London Gazette Extraordinary," of Saturday the 2nd of October, 1801, appeared the welcome announcement of the preliminaries of the peace having been signed on behalf of France and England.

The news of peace was received by both nations with enthusiastic joy. It manifested itself amongst our own people in the ordinary form of demonstration; general illuminations, firing of field-pieces, public banquets, dramatic entertainments, and poetical effusions, in which Mr. Pye, the poet laureate, shone conspicuously. The populace, on the

arrival of Colonel Lauriston, took the horses from the carriage which contained him and M. Otto, on their way to Lord Hawkesbury in Downing Street, to exchange ratifications, and they drew them back on their return amidst the most enthusiastic shouting and huzzaing. It would seem that the highest compliment that a "free and enlightened people" can pay, is to make themselves for the nonce "beasts of burthen." Colonel Lauriston appears to have enjoyed his ride exceedingly, he gave the populace ten guineas^o for drink, and during the few days he was in London he never appeared in the streets without attracting a crowd, and receiving loud huzzas. He is described to have been at this time "a very handsome young man, about 27 or 28 years of age, and of a very genteel and pleasing address." * Probably, on his return to Paris, he might have assured his fellow citizens that John Bull was not, after all, the unmitigated monster he had been represented to them.

* Annual Register (1801), p. 277.

The three per cent Consols on the news of the preliminaries made a bound from 59 to 66; and at Paris, the *Rentes Promisaires* rose in a still higher proportion, from 33 to 40.

By this peace, the Continent, which had been so long closed, was opened, and packets were regularly interchanged between the two countries. In each the troops were to a great extent disbanded, and the recruiting service discontinued. Bonaparte, the most heroic of all actors, and the most theatrical of all heroes, assumed a new *role*, and became the "*Hero-pacifier of Europe*."

The year became fruitful in treaties for pacification; at the end of 1800, a definitive treaty of peace had been concluded between the French Republic and the Dey of Algiers. Treaties between the French and Austrians, and the King of Naples, between Spain and Portugal, and France and Portugal had preceded the peace with England. The moment that the preliminaries were signed,

Bonaparte patched up a peace with the Ottoman Empire.

The definitive treaty of peace was subscribed at Amiens by the Marquis Cornwallis for England, and Joseph Bonaparte for France ; Azara for Spain, and Schimmelpennick for Holland, on the 27th of March, 1802. Europe was intoxicated with joy at this the most magnificent “ sham ” that ever was perpetrated.

CHAPTER VII.

Termination of the Peace—King's message to Parliament—Extraordinary impression produced by it, and extensive preparations—Napoleon assumes the title of Emperor—His hypocritical profession of peace—His letter to George III. and answer—Necessity of conquest by Napoleon—Position of the French Empire—Increase of the English navy—Napoleon's plan of Invasion by the Flotilla, and the extent of the equipment—Magnificent measures taken by England for defence—Great improvement in the Naval administration—Napoleon's attention to petty details—Causes of his success—Announcement of distribution of decorations at Boulogne—Extraordinary omens—Dramatic effect of Napoleon's pageant—The grand display on the 3rd of August—Miserable disappointment of the Troops—Napoleon's object disclosed.

"THE Peace of Amiens" was, as might have been foreseen, a mere hollow truce. It was kept as long as it gave Bonaparte "the breathing time" he wanted to reconstruct his navy, and then like "a giant refreshed"

he broke the rope of sand, which had kept for a time his hands, but not his energies, tied. He then went on extending his influence over the Continent, and preparing his way for the universal dominion, which seemed to have been the governing influence of his brilliant, but unscrupulous career.

Since the peace Bonaparte had exhibited such undisguised and contemptuous arrogance towards the English Government, and thrown such insolent and indecent impediments in the way of carrying out the definitive treaty, as it was called, that a renewal of hostilities became painfully evident.

The English Government, aware of what was looming in the distance, soon found itself in the situation of being compelled to break the terms of the treaty, by hesitating at restoring Malta (which they had re-taken) to the Knights of St. John, thus affording its hereditary foe the excuse he wanted for a renewal of the war.

On the 8th of March, 1803, although France and England were nominally at

peace, a message from His Majesty (George III.) was brought down to both Houses of Parliament, and which announced that "as very considerable military preparations were carrying on in the ports of France and Holland, His Majesty had judged it expedient to adopt additional measures of precaution for the security of his dominions; that discussions of great importance were carrying on between His Majesty and the French Government, the result of which was uncertain; and he, therefore, relied with confidence on Parliament to enable him to take such measures as circumstances might require for supporting the honour of his crown and the essential interests of his people." *

The sensation which this message created was immense; it was received all over Europe as the signal of war between Great Britain and France. Every minor interest and lesser consideration were absorbed in the great question, "Shall we have peace or war with France?"

* Annual Register (1803), p. 87.

The message on the following day was taken into consideration by both Houses. In the Commons it was moved by Mr. Fox, and received without a dissentient voice.

On the 11th, Mr. Garth moved that 10,000 additional seamen, including 8400 marines, should be added to our force, and preparations made in the principal harbours of the kingdom for the most vigorous hostilities. Such was the military ardour shewn by the people, that in addition to a force from 3 to 400,000 men by sea or land, the whole country was filled with volunteers, who were ready to encounter the victor of Marengo and Hohenlinden, in defence of their country and their liberties.

On the 12th of March our ambassador left Paris, and orders were issued for seizing the ships of France in our ports. This measure, as might have been expected, was retaliated upon by Bonaparte detaining all the British subjects that were in France at the time. The war was then renewed with a greater fierceness than before the peace,

and the justice of it on our side has been established, although at the time open to much discussion.

Bonaparte had, from being First Consul, raised himself to the Imperial Purple, by assuming the title of Emperor on the 18th of March, 1804. The sentiments of Napoleon towards this country may be gathered from an address to the legislative body of the nation he governed, on the last day of that year.

After some hypocritical cant about the gratitude he should feel to see peace reigning throughout the world, * he declares that he had no ambition to exercise in Europe a greater influence, "and that no State should be incorporated in the Empire;" but that he would not sacrifice his rights nor the ties that attached him to the States which he had created.

After his customary display of the strength, resources and flourishing condition of every

* In later times we have heard that "*L'empire c'est paix*," with at least equal claims to our credibility.

part of the French Empire, the valour of her troops, the prowess of her navy, and the prosperous state of her finances, he hints at what he has in store for England.

“ Whatever may be the movements of the English, the destiny of France is fixed. Strong in the riches and courage of its defenders, she will faithfully cultivate the alliance of friendly nations. France will neither merit enemies, nor fear them. When England shall be convinced of the impotence of her efforts to agitate the Continent, when she shall feel that she cannot but lose in a war, without motive or object, *that France will never accept any other conditions than those of the treaty of Amiens*, and never will consent that she shall exercise the right of breaking at pleasure those treaties by appropriating Malta to herself; then England will really obtain pacific sentiments—hatred and envy exist but for a time.”* Napoleon has however shewn the remarkable longevity of those evil qualities.

* Annual Register, (1804.)

England was thus made acquainted from the lips of her arch-enemy himself, with the only terms on which he would condescend to be in amity with her.

It was not, however, enough to insult the nation, but the Emperor took upon himself to address its monarch in an autograph letter, and which is as follows :

“ Letter from the Emperor Napoleon to His Majesty the King of England, dated 2nd January, 1805, and communicated to the Legislative Body of France on the 4th of February, 1805.

“ Sir and Brother,—Called to the throne of France by Providence, and by the suffrages of the Senate, the People and the Army, my first sentiment is a wish for peace. France and England abuse their prosperity. They may contend for ages ; but do their governments well fulfil the most sacred of their duties ? and will not so much blood, shed uselessly, and without a view to any end, condemn them in their own conscience ? I consider it as no disgrace to make the first

step. I have, I hope, sufficiently proved to the world that I fear none of the chances of war : it besides, presents nothing that I need to fear ; peace is the wish of my heart, but war has néver been inconsistent with my glory. I conjure your majesty not to deny yourself the happiness of giving peace to the world, nor to leave that sweet satisfaction to your children : for certainly there never was a more fortunate opportunity nor a moment more favourable to silence all the passions, and listen only to the sentiments of humanity and reason. This moment once lost, what end can be assigned to a war which all my efforts will not be able to terminate ! Your Majesty has gained more within 10 years (both in territory and riches) than the whole extent of Europe. Your nation is at the highest point of prosperity—what can it hope from war ? To form a coalition with some powers of the Continent ! The Continent will remain tranquil : a coalition can only increase the preponderance and continental greatness of France.

“To re-act intestine troubles? The times are no longer the same. To destroy our finances? Finances founded on a flourishing agriculture can never be destroyed. To take from France her colonies? The colonies are to France only a secondary object; and does not your Majesty already possess more than you know how to preserve? If your Majesty would but reflect, you must perceive that the war is without an object, without any presumable result to yourself. Alas! what a melancholy prospect, to cause two nations to fight merely for the sake of fighting. The world is sufficiently large for our two nations to live in it, and reason is sufficiently powerful to discover means of reconciling everything, when the wish for reconciliation exists on both sides. I have, however, fulfilled a sacred duty, and one which is precious to my heart. I trust your Majesty will believe in the sincerity of my sentiments, and my wish to give you every proof of it, &c.—NAPOLÉON.”

Answer, given by LORD MULGRAVE,
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,
dated the 14th January, 1805, addressed
to M. Talleyrand.

“ His Britannic Majesty has received the letter which has been addressed to him by the Head of the French Government, dated the 2nd of the present month. There is no object which His Majesty has more at heart than to avail himself of the first opportunity to procure again for his subjects the advantages of a peace, founded on bases, which may not be incompatible with the permanent security and essential interests of his dominions. His Majesty is persuaded that this end can only be attained by arrangements, which may at the same time provide for the future safety and tranquillity of Europe, and prevent the recurrence of the dangers and calamities in which it is involved. Conformably to this sentiment, His Majesty feels it is impossible for him to answer more particularly to the overture that has been made him, till he has had time to com-

municate with the Powers on the Continent, with whom he is engaged in confidential connexions and relations, and particularly the Emperor of Russia, who has given the strongest proofs of his wisdom and elevation of the sentiments with which he is animated, and the lively interest which he takes in the safety and independence of the Continent.

MULGRAVE.*

“This letter,” (the Emperor’s), says Bourrienne, his private Secretary, with edifying candour, “which commenced with the words, *Monsieur mon frère*, was a master-piece of deceit, for the Emperor certainly would have been very sorry for a renewal of peace with the English Government, especially since the declaration of war by Spain against England, had placed at his disposal the Spanish fleet of upwards of sixty ships under the command of Admiral Gravina. England, chagrined at the impotence of all her efforts against France, sought to avenge

* State Papers, Annual Register, vol. 47, p. 616.

herself in a way I shall not attempt to justify. France alone was at war with England, without any of the allies, with the exception of Holland, having made any demonstration of hostilities. Nothing therefore (that is assuming the facts to be true), could justify the conduct of the British government towards Spain.”*

That Bourrienne has not unjustly maligned the memory of his great master, in attributing to him “a master-piece of deceit,” with about as much respectful admiration as he would have exhibited for a master-piece of successful strategy, we shall see by comparing the words of the Secretary with those of the Emperor. “The world,” said Napoleon, “believe me the enemy of peace ; but I must fulfil my destiny. I am forced to combat and conquer in order to preserve. You must accomplish something new every three months, in order to captivate the French

* Bourrienne, *Private Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte*, vol. iii. p. 171.

people. With them whoever ceases to advance is lost.”*

The Historian of Europe, commenting on these words, adds† “continued progress, fresh successions of victories, unbounded glory, were the conditions on which he held the throne. He knew well that the moment these failed his authority would begin to decline.”

The reader of traditionary lore may possibly be reminded of a favourite subject of romance writers—the Vampyre, who for gold or prolonged life has bartered his soul to the evil one, and can only maintain his life by periodical sacrifices of fresh and innocent victims. Between the wildest flights of imagination, and the soberest details of history, these are frequently parallels, which are no less startling than exact. Is Napoleon the last, as well as the first of his dynasty, who finds peace impossible with the precarious tenure on which he holds his

* De Stael, *Dix ans d'Exil*, 15.

† Alison's Hist. Eur. vol. ix. p. 1.

splendid but shadowy crown? Whatever *might* have been the real object of the astute Napoleon in thus extending the olive branch, it is beyond all question that he left no means unattempted that could increase and consolidate his power, or cripple the enemy that had dared to limit it, or put a boundary to his conquering march. The acquiescence of the greater part of the European Courts, except England, who never acknowledged it, to the assumption of his new dignity, and the lust of insatiable conquest, emboldened him to higher flights; it was not enough, that the iron crown of Charlemagne should circle his own brows, but his views of family aggrandizement now became equally extensive. Thrones were to be provided for his brothers, and other members of his family. He had begun a new dynasty, which was destined in his own opinion to hold permanent sway over the vast dominions of France, and what were at that time her mighty dependencies. Alas! for human

expectations and human ambition, since that time "How have the mighty fallen!"

At this period France had a population of 35 millions, and an army of not less than 600,000. Of this nearly 100,000 were employed in the protection of Italy, Holland, and other territories, claimed as her own, leaving at the Emperor's arbitrary disposal in France, nearly 400,000. Making a liberal allowance for non-effective men, there remained a force of 300,000 men, almost all tried soldiers, inured to war, ready for immediate service, and officered by men distinguished throughout the world for their brilliant achievements. Allowing for home protection, and a sufficient force to keep the Germans in check, Napoleon could reckon on 150,000 men, which, according to Thiers' authority, were the finest troops which even the heroic land of France had ever beheld, and which he openly reserved for his projected invasion of England. Artillery and military stores were in abundance, and it

was the expressed opinion of Napoleon himself, which France received of him, and perhaps has not yet renounced, that if those 150,000 men could only once have planted their feet on our shores, "only one battle would have been needed, the result of which could not have been doubtful, and victory would have brought them to London."*

It was written in the book of destiny (which Napoleon firmly believed in, but was apt to read it in the way best suited to his hopes and aspirations,) that that battle was never to be fought! Not one of the 150,000 men ever was brought into London, except perhaps on a visit of pleasure, or curiosity, and they could only from Boulogne "cast long and lingering looks" at the shore in their view, but which they were doomed never to tread, in quest of plunder or glory. If England had been unconscious of her perils, prior to her hostilities with France, which had ended for a time in the peace of Amiens, eight years of war had opened her eyes.

* Thiers' "History of the Consulate and Empire."

The British Navy from 1793 to 1801, had been increased by the building of new ships, and captures from her enemies, from 268 sail of the line and frigates, to 480. Little did France, Holland and Spain dream, when their dockyards were busied with preparations to crush their foe, that they were unconsciously affording that foe the means to crush themselves! While the English Navy was thus nearly doubled, the French had been reduced by repeated defeats, and casualties in proportion, to little more than one hundred sail of the line and frigates. The loss of her Allies had been even greater in proportion,* while the mercantile navy of England had increased by nearly a third, that of France had been nearly destroyed. The chief object, which it would now seem that Napoleon had in view, in consenting to the peace—the restoration of the French Navy, so that it might meet the English on equal terms, had been frustrated by the

* See Creasy's "Invasions of England," p. 222, or full statistics of the French and English forces.

short time the cessation from hostilities had lasted; "the pear was not ripe," when his eager hand was stretched forth to pluck it.

He was assured by his naval council, that the means his fleet afforded him were totally inadequate to the successful invasion of England, and he now resolved once more to organize a flotilla, on a greater scale of extent and magnificence. His plan was, according to her own avowal, to distract the attention of the British Government, by sending out his fleets in various directions, and seizing upon the time when the English Navy should be most scattered in pursuit of them, to reassemble and cover the passage of the large army, which he had collected for the attack, and which were to be conveyed in the flotillas now forming. These vessels consisted of 12,000 flat-bottomed boats, so constructed that they might be launched, and land their living freight of armed men on our coasts.

* "The grand object of the whole operation,"

* Quoted in Alison's Europe, vol. ix. p. 59.

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according to Napoleon's own avowal, "is to procure for us, the superiority for a few days before Boulogne—masters of the Channel for a few days, a hundred and fifty thousand men will embark in the two thousand vessels which are there assembled, and the expedition is concluded."

It was in the extraordinary perfection of the arrangements for this flotilla, that the genius of France for military organization shone with conspicuous lustre.

The flotilla was to consist of three classes ; each vessel of the first class, was to carry one hundred soldiers, and twenty-four seamen to work it, two heavy guns, and arms and ammunition. The vessels of the second class were to carry a field piece, an artillery waggon, and two artillery horses. The third were vessels of a lighter construction, worked by sixty oars, and the soldiers were trained to pull them. The second flotilla was to convey the rest of the artillery horses, between 7 and 8000 cavalry horses, a park of heavy artillery, and ammunition for a

whole campaign. Altogether, two thousand vessels of various descriptions were built in the different harbours of France, and brought together at Boulogne, (which was strongly fortified,) by creeping under the French shore, in order to keep out of the way of the British squadron.*

Napoleon himself has disclosed his plan of attack in the following note, which he wrote at the time of abandoning his great project :—

“What was my design in the creation of the flotilla at Boulogne?

“I wished to assemble forty or fifty ships of the line in the harbour of Martinique, by operations combined in the harbours of Toulon, Cadiz, Ferrol, and Brest; to bring them suddenly back to Boulogne; to find myself in this way, during 15 days, the master of the sea; to have one hundred and fifty thousand men encamped on the coast; three or four thousand vessels in the flotilla, and to set

* See Creasy's "Invasions," p. 244.

sail the moment that the signal was given of the arrival of the combined fleet. That project has failed. If Admiral Villeneuve, instead of entering into the harbour of Ferrol, had contented himself with joining the Spanish squadron, and instantly made sail for Brest, and joined Admiral Gantheaume, my army would have embarked, and it was all over with England. To succeed in this object, it was necessary to assemble 150,000 men at Boulogne; to have there 4000 transports, and immense *materiel*, to embark all that, and nevertheless to prevent the enemy from divining my object. It appeared scarcely practicable to do so. If I had succeeded, it would have been by doing the converse of what might have been expected."

"If fifty ships of the line were to assemble to cover the descent upon England, nothing but transport vessels were required in the harbours of the Channel, and all that assemblage of gun-boats, floating batteries, and armed vessels was totally useless. Had I assembled together 3 or 4000 unarmed transports, no doubt the enemy would have

perceived that I awaited the arrival of my fleets to attempt the passage, but by constructing praams and gun-boats, I appeared to be opposing cannon to cannon, and the enemy was in this manner deceived. They conceived that I intended to attempt the passage by main force, by means of my flotilla. They never penetrated my real design; and when, from the failure of the movements of my squadrons, my project was revealed, the utmost consternation pervaded the councils of London, and all men of sense in England confessed that England had never been so near her ruin.”*

This flotilla daily augmented and became more concentrated at Boulogne, the appointed place for disembarkation. As early as November, 1803, nearly a thousand vessels had collected in that port, capable of carrying 100,000 men. Another mass of vessels was being more slowly collected in the Dutch ports, and a squadron was being formed in

* Dumas, xii. 115, 116; and Montholon, iii. app. 384. Alison, vol. ix. p. 58.

the Texel, which would, between them, make up the required number.

During the year 1804 the sailors, who were to work the flotilla, were constantly exercised in every manœuvre and movement which would give them expertness in embarkation and disembarkation, and resisting attacks on their safe transit. In the eyes of the world, and in their own belief, they were trained to fight their way across the Channel. Napoleon, however, kept his own counsel, and the arch-dissembler had, as we have seen, his own plan in his pocket, or in that yet more unfathomable abyss—his own inscrutable mind.

The English were, however, not letting their great enemy have it all his own way. The efforts made by her at that period corresponded not only with the patriotism and spirit of her people, but proved that she had the power of repelling invasion.

At this time (1805), besides the militia, which were 80,000 strong, the regular army numbered 130,000, and 50,000 in addition by proscription ; an act, which we shall sub-

sequently mention, for a levy *en masse* was also passed, almost by acclamation, by which all men in the United Kingdom, between the ages of 17 and 55, were liable to be called into active service, in case of invasion. In a few weeks 300,000 volunteers were enrolled, armed, and disciplined. In addition to 50,000 seamen, including 12,000 marines, 10,000 were granted, and 40,000 more when the war actually broke out. Seventy-five ships of the line, and 270 frigates and smaller vessels were put in commission.*

"The harbours of France and Holland were closely blockaded; Lord Nelson rode triumphant in the Mediterranean; and, excepting when their small craft were stealing round the headlands to the general rendezvous at Boulogne, the flag of France, at least in large fleets, disappeared from the ocean."†

Many desultory attempts were made during the summer to impede the assembling

* Sir Francis Head's "Defenceless State of Great Britain."

† Alison's History of Europe.

of troops at Boulogne, or to destroy the vessels in the harbours, but with too little success, although conducted with the utmost skill and gallantry, to merit particular notice. The shallowness of the water near the coast, and the strong defences of the harbour, prevented any serious damage being done. Our seamen were, however, kept in constant action by these attempts, and familiarized with the service in which it was expected they were to be engaged.

To restore the Navy from its paralyzed state to its pristine health and vigour, and to enable the nation to withdraw from the abyss which was open to receive her, was the professed object of Lord Melville's naval administration. On his removal from office taking place, Admiral Sir Charles Middleton (afterwards Lord Barham), a very able and experienced officer in the civil department of the navy, succeeded him.

The new Admiralty gave great satisfaction by its activity. Supplies of timber and stores poured into our exhausted arsenals;

a new survey was ordered for the inspection of our coasts and produced a report, from which a new naval code was produced by Admiral Berkeley, and the confidence of the nation was again placed in her "wooden walls."

There was still, however, such a total want of intelligence as to the enemy's design and state of preparation, that, to make use of the words of the Annual Register for 1805, (which we fear are applicable to more recent periods of our naval history), "they prevailed in an unaccountable degree, *and appear to have been handed down to the present board of Admiralty from their predecessors.*"

"It certainly was owing to this strange want of precaution or method, that not only the frigates and single ships of the enemy, but even their entire fleet, escaped from their ports, which were supposed to be in a state of blockade, and it was only by the accounts of their depredations in our colonies, or the news of their return to Europe, that even their having sailed came to be known."

While the Admiralty in England were thus making up for past deficiencies, our invaders were shewing an immense amount of foresight in anticipating the hazards of their enterprise, and of alacrity and skill in meeting them. The comprehensive mind of a man of genius has been familiarly compared to the trunk of an elephant, which from its elasticity and strength, can pick up a needle or tear up by its roots a forest tree. Napoleon's mind was undoubtedly of this order; it could conceive the most gigantic enterprises—the complete organization of nearly half a million of men—the overthrow of a dynasty, or the destruction of an ancient monarchy, and yet provide for the minutest and pettiest details. He knew the value of “little things,” the neglect of which may often destroy the boldest conceptions of genius. In the memoirs of one of his most renowned Marshals (Ney) is given the following illustration of Bonaparte's elaborate power in going into the *minutiæ* of arrangements.

“The instructions of the Emperor were

so luminous, minute, and precise, as to give the inferior commanders nothing to do but to follow them out specifically. To ascertain the time required for the embarkation, Marshal Ney distributed the gunpowder, caissons, artillery, projectiles, and stores on board the transports provided for that purpose, and he divided that portion of the flotilla assigned to him into sub-divisions; every battalion, every company, received the boats destined for its use, *every man, down to the lowest drummer, was apprised of the boat and the place in the boat where he was to set himself.*"*

There were, however, other causes for Napoleon's success.

"Independently of these talents, the principal causes of his success may be comprehended in two words 'numbers and temerity.' It is not without reason that the Institute thought fit to class him in the section of me-

* Cited in Alison's History of Europe, vol. ix. p. 69, *note*.

chanics, because on every occasion he had endeavoured to assemble, and to direct against the point of attack, a mass of power superior to that which was opposed to him. He places at the heads of the columns those officers on whose desperate audacity he can perfectly rely, and whose example cannot fail to animate the troops—of such men he has always a provision. He often spends six hours in the review of a single regiment; carefully examines the colonels; the chiefs of battalions, and the captains; and never fails to take notice of those, of whose spirit and intelligence he receives a favourable impression. The excellent conduct of his officers has often made amends for the deficient instructions of the troops, and sometimes for the mistakes of the general.

“It has been said that his military system is of his own creation; but this is a mere chimera. He makes war as all generals who had common sense have made war since the beginning of the world. Nothing is done by enchantment. Every service is per-

formed indeed with celerity, but that celerity is the result of method and regularity.”*

Napoleon had, on the celebration of the fete at Paris, on the 10th of July, in commemoration of the great republican triumphs—the taking of the Bastille and the first federation, publicly announced that he intended to distribute in person the decoration of the Legion of Honour to the army assembled in the camp of Boulogne. On the morning of the 18th he left Saint Cloud, and in those days, when railways were not even dreamed of, such was the rapidity of his movements, that on the following morning, while every one was busy at Boulogne making preparation for his reception, he had arrived there, and was at the port in the midst of the labourers examining the works. If any mortal man had the gift of ubiquity it was Napoleon. “He seemed to multiply himself by his inconceivable activity, and one might say he was present everywhere.”†

* General Sarrazin *Confession du Général Buonaparté*, a L'Abbé Maury, 1811.

† Bourrienne, vol. iii. p. 141.

According to the authority we have cited, the pretended object of Napoleon's visit, the distribution of crosses, was a mere feint, and all the knowing ones at Paris believed that he actually then intended to carry his grand project of the invasion of England into execution. "How, indeed, on beholding such great preparations, so many transports created as it were by enchantment, could any one have supposed that he did not really intend to attempt a descent upon England."*

M. Bourrienne himself gives the best possible reasons why we should not "suppose" anything of the kind—the very fact of that being his avowed object, was the most convincing proof that he meant nothing of the kind. "People," says his private biographer, "almost fancied him already in London."

Alison seems himself impressed with the sincerity of Napoleon's intentions; he says, "shortly after his return from Italy *

* Bourrienne, vol. iii. p. 142.

† A marginal note of "Aug. 3" is given, but it seems to have escaped the indefatigable narrator that Napoleon had made a previous visit at the time stated in the text.

he repaired to the camp at Boulogne, there to inspect, in person, the vast military force arrayed on the shores of the Channel, and to direct the distant movements of the fleets by which he hoped to obtain, for a time at least, the mastery of the seas, and the means of safely disembarking that mighty host within a few days' march of London." *

Whatever might have been the object of the great conqueror, his presence in the midst of his troops inspired them with a new impulse. An almost incredible degree of emulation stimulated all ranks, and it extended from the commanders of the different camps to the common soldiers, and even to the labourers.

Every one eagerly sought out for prognostics of success; and it was soon discovered that the Emperor's camp was pitched on the very site of a Roman camp, which the Roman Cæsar had formerly constructed to menace England. In another spot some medals of William the Conqueror were

* Alison, Hist. vol ix. p. 44.

found, "where, *perhaps*," says Bourrienne, with his usual delightful candour, "they had been buried for the purpose of being dug up," and could not fail to satisfy the most incredulous that Napoleon must conquer England.*

The following announcement had previously appeared in the official organ of that and the present day, of a similar event :

"Boulogne, 18 *Brumaire*, an XII.

"On Thursday last the First Consul reviewed the army and put it through several manœuvres. It has been remarked, as a happy omen, that in digging the ground for the First Consul's camp a battle-axe was found, which belonged to the Roman army which invaded England."†

It was on the remains of the Roman Camp that 80,000 men assembled under the camp of Marshal Soult, to witness the distribution of the crosses of the Legion of Honour. Napoleon had a wonderful eye

* Bourrienne, p. 143.

† Moniteur, 12th November, 1803.

for dramatic effect, and what the playbills would call a "grand tableau" was got up. In the centre of the plain was a little hill, on which Napoleon stood in the midst of his soldiers. There he placed his throne, surrounded by his brilliant staff, and around this centre of glory the regiments were drawn up in lines, like so many diverging rays. From this elevation Napoleon repeated his oath, in a loud voice, and then a burst of enthusiasm rent the skies. The Emperor never seemed to be in such good humour with himself and everybody else as at this moment. Not only Fortune seemed to be propitious to his wishes but the very elements—those Republican elements that had the audacity on the opposite shore to refuse to obey the behest of the Danish usurper—acknowledged *his* supremacy. A storm came on during this brilliant day, and it was feared that the safety of the flotilla would have been endangered. But the Cæsar of the hour had only to descend the hill from which he had distributed

the crosses, and direct what measures should be adopted, "when upon his arrival the storm ceased as if by enchantment. The flotilla entered the port safe and sound, and he went back to the camp, where the sports and amusements prepared for the soldiers commenced ; and in the evening the brilliant fireworks which were let off rose in a luminous column, which was distinctly seen from the English coast."*

But another scene of the drama was to be played on the 3rd of August, which was an important day for Boulogne, and probably for England also, although the comedy was not ended on that day, yet we shall see the end was near, and what was left to be played out might be easily anticipated.

On that day groups of citizens were conversing in the streets, an unusual stir, even in those busy days, prevailed in the neighbouring camps, and every one, military and civil, was on the *qui vive* ; first they exchanged significant nods and looks, then

* Bourrienne, p. 144.

whispers, then eager shouts and cries ring in the air. It was at last generally stated and believed that the day had *at last* arrived when Napoleon would place himself at the head of his panting followers, and lead them across the Channel into the "land of promise," that they could see from their camps whitening the edge of the horizon. What joyful news was that for an army, wearied with the daily repetition of embarking and disembarking—of rushing into their respective boats for the simple purpose of seeing how soon they could take their seats and rush out of them. The majority of them had conned over the task, repeated the same lesson for upwards of two years, and began to be rather tired of it. On this day they believed they were actually to perform what they had so long been rehearsing. Many a tender farewell was taken by Jean-not of his Jeannette. Many an oath was pledged of eternal fidelity, and many a wish expressed for the joyful day when the hero should return covered with glory, his knap-

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sack containing the Marshal's truncheon (which every French private carries in anticipation), and his pouch and pockets filled with gold—the gold of the perfidious Islanders. The promise of the gold and the truncheon, in some degree, consoles the sinking Jeannette, and she parts with her hero as he rushes to join his company at the bugle's sound.

A shout that cleaves the welkin is heard! —the great Emperor himself is really arrived to lead his forces in person. "I told you so—I knew he would not disappoint us this time," is passed from mouth to mouth. On that very morning the infantry muster on the sands, at low-water mark; 100,000 men, drawn up in a single line, occupy three leagues. The marble features of the Emperor, unaccustomed to betray any emotion, relax into a beaming smile of approval. Never had even his practised and experienced eye, accustomed as it was to

"The pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war," seen anything so fine as that line. He had

now either before him or close at hand all the corps which had been destined for the projected descent on our coasts.

The order was listened for with beating hearts, but with "bated breath," and attention drawn up to the very acme of painful endurance. At length "THE SIGNAL IS GIVEN." Infantry, cavalry, artillery, as if one electric shock quivered through them, were in an instant under arms, and took their well known appointed places opposite their respective vessels. Then a CANNON SHOT IS HEARD to boom o'er the ocean, and is echoed on the plains; the field officers dismount, and each places himself at the head of his men; ANOTHER SHOT IS HEARD! the signal to embark; a THIRD, and a word of command, "COLONELS, FORWARD!" thrilled through each heart, "and lived along the line;" a FOURTH was instantly succeeded by the welcome and long expected "MARCH!" "Then rose from sea to sky" a wild, and a triumphant shout, and in perfect order the men take their places; so admirably have

they been drilled, that in ten minutes and a half 25,000 men have embarked.! Yes, the long wished for moment has at last arrived, which was to lead them to every thing dear to the soldier's heart, pillage, promotion, and deathless glory.

But what means that other signal? Blank disappointment and astonishment—and rage perhaps—but the chronicles don't record it, are on every countenance, it is the order to *disembark*, and the poor deluded soldiers are now made aware, that the whole was a mere "make believe," a feint to try the rapidity with which the requisite movement could be made. Curses "not loud but deep" relieve the pent up feelings of the soldier's breast; but to obey is as mechanical, with disciplined troops, as to breathe, and in thirteen minutes from the time they took their places in the boats, they had relanded, and were in battle array on the shore! How Jeannot met the bewildered Jeannette without either the marshal's truncheon or the English gold, the biographer of Ney, from whose memoirs

these incidents are taken, does not condescend to acquaint us. We are, in reading this account, forcibly reminded of another splendid achievement in French history which tells us how—

“The King of France, marched up the hill,
With twenty thousand men :”

And then—

“The King of France, with all his men,
March'd down the hill again.”

Oftentimes as, with suspended breath, we have admired and wondered at the daring personal bravery of Napoleon, the cool courage with which he could meet one hundred and fifty thousand men, after bamboozling them in this style, seems to us the most wonderful.

This was the last journey which Napoleon made to Boulogne. His secretary, and of course admirer (for a man may be a hero to his secretary, if he may not to his valet) gives us the following clue to his motives. “The invasion of England was as little the object of that as the previous journey to

Boulogne. All Napoleon had in view was to stimulate the enthusiasm of the troops, and to hold out those threats against England which he conceived necessary for diverting attention from the real motive of his hostile preparations, which was to invade Germany, and repulse the Russian troops who had begun their march towards Austria. Such was the true object of Napoleon's last journey to Boulogne."*

It seems that the army was not the only mass of persons who were astonished, all France believed that the moment for the invasion of England had at length arrived.†

The same authority also states that—

“England was never so much deceived by Bonaparte as during the period of the encampment at Boulogne. The English really believed that an invasion was intended,” (and there does seem *some* justification for that belief) “and the Government exhausted

* Bourrienne's Private Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte, vol. iii. p. 137.—Colburn and Bentley's Ed.

† Ibid. page 148.

itself in efforts for raising men and money to guard against the danger of being taken by surprise. Such indeed is the advantage always possessed by the assailant; he can choose the point on which he thinks it most convenient to act, while the party which stands on the defence, and is afraid of being attacked, is compelled to be prepared on every point. However, Napoleon, who was then in full vigour of his genius and activity, had always his eye fixed on objects remote from those which surrounded him, and which seemed to absorb his attention.”*

* Bourrienne, vol. iii.

CHAPTER VIII.

Napoleon renounces his intention for a time of invading England — Nelson's sagacity in detecting Napoleon's design — His celebrated Dispatch — Relative strength of the French and English Fleets — Admiral Collingwood's penetration — Prompt arrival of the "Curieux" — Consequences arising from its celerity — Admiral Stirling's junction of force with Sir Robert Calder — Important engagement off Cape Finisterre — Important results of the victory — Rage of Napoleon — Abandonment of the intended Invasion, and recall of "The Army of England" — National ingratitude towards Sir Robert Calder; his trial and sentence — Different opinions as to Napoleon's being sincere in his intended attack on England — What his avowed intentions were in the anticipated conquest — Probable consequence of a successful attack — Conduct of French invading armies — Fearful outrages in Egypt and Algeria — Napoleon ascribes his defeat to the elements — Opinions of Thiers, "The Quarterly Review," and Sir Walter Scott as to the probability of success.

WE are now to trace the series of events which induced Napoleon either to renounce

serious intentions of invading England (if he really had any) or to put an end to the magnificent farce he was acting on the shores of Boulogne. All he professed to require, was a few days' superiority in the sea before that port—and hitherto every thing had succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectations. His design had never been penetrated by the English Government. Our great naval commander Nelson, had been decoyed by false intelligence to the West Indies, while the French Admiral Villeneuve was returning to Europe with twenty sail of the line, eighteen days in advance of him. It was only on his arrival at Antigua, on the 13th of June, that Nelson had reason to believe that his opponent had sailed from Martinique on the 28th of May previously, and he then for the first time felt convinced that the combined fleet had returned to Europe. With the rapid intuition of his nature, he at once suspected some ulterior combination, and on the spur of the moment dispatched several fast-sailing vessels to Lisbon and Portsmouth,

to warn our Government of the probable return of the enemy's fleets—"To this sagacious step, as will immediately appear, the safety of the British empire is mainly to be attributed."*

Without allowing his sailors a moment's rest, England's gallant saviour set sail the very same day, and reached Gibraltar on the 18th of July.

The fleet under the command of Nelson was less than half the number of the enemy's, and the intelligence of the strength of the latter, when there was no fleet of ours capable of resisting it, caused great alarm in England. The most energetic measures were however taken by the Admiralty, every available ship and man were brought together, and Admiral Collingwood was instantly despatched with a squadron of five ships of the line to Gibraltar. It is due to the fame of that great officer, to assign to him the merit of discovering the real designs of

* Alison's Europe, 7th ed. vol. ix. p. 59.

Napoleon, and he alone seems to have clearly penetrated them. On the 21st of July, 1805, before the French fleet had been heard of, since its return from the West Indies, he wrote to Nelson his suspicion that the enemy's plan was to raise the blockade of Ferrol and Rochfort, (then blockaded by the English) and with the united force make for Ireland. "The history of Europe," says its historian, "does not contain a more striking instance of political and warlike penetration" than this letter contained ; so exact was its anticipation that it was all but a transcript of the secret instructions which Napoleon had actually given to his Admiral.

The following is an extract.

" July 21st, 1805.

" We approached, my dear Lord, with caution, not knowing whether we were to expect you or the Frenchmen first. I have always had an idea that Ireland alone was the object which they have in view, and still believe that to be their ultimate destination. They will now liberate the Ferrol squadron from

Calder, *make the round of the bay, and taking the Rochfort people with them, appear off Ushant, perhaps with thirty-four sail, there to be joined by twenty more.* This appears a probable plan; for unless it be to bring their powerful fleets and armies to some great point of service—some rash attempt at conquest—they have only been subjecting them to a chance of loss, which I do not believe Bonaparte would do without the hope of an adequate reward. The French Government never aims at little things while great objects are in view. I have considered the invasion of Ireland as the real mark and butt of all their operations. Their flight to the West Indies *was to take off the naval force*, which proved the great impediment to their undertaking.” *

Although Villeneuve had sailed on the 28th of May from Martinique, it was the 23rd of June before adverse winds enabled him to reach the latitude of the Azores. In the meantime, Napoleon despatched orders

* Collingwood's Memoirs, i. 145, 146.

to the fleet at Rochfort to join Admiral Gantheaume at the Lizard Point, or if he had been unable to escape from Brest, to make for Ferrol and join the combined fleet there. "He literally counted the days and hours till some intelligence should arrive of the great armament approaching from the West Indies—the signal for the completion of all his vast and profound calculations." *

But, profound as they were, he was thrown out of them by a very simple circumstance. One of the fast-sailing vessels which we have already mentioned as being despatched by Nelson to warn the Admiralty of the French fleet's return to Europe—the "Curieux" brig, caught a glimpse of the fleet on the 19th of June, in a latitude which suggested that they were making for some port north of the Mediterranean. The Captain, with the conviction that he was the bearer of intelligence which would fix the destinies of the world, continued his course with the utmost rapidity to England, and arrived at London on the

* Alison, vol. ix. p. 61.

9th of July, having made the passage from Antigua in twenty-five days. The Admiralty, feeling the critical danger of the moment, gave immediate orders to Admiral Stirling to raise the blockade of Rochfort, join Sir Robert Calder off Ferrol, and with their united force intercept the allied squadrons on their homeward passage towards Brest.

In the meantime, the combined fleet, under the command of Villeneuve and Gravina, was on its way to liberate, successively, the French ships blockaded in Ferrol, Rochfort, and Brest. The English squadrons were too small to contend against the fleet, now augmented to fifty sail, which was thus "to enter the Channel in triumph, and give, by its appearance off Boulogne, the final signal for the long delayed embarkation of the Army of England." *

We have now to narrate the magnificent result of the rapid voyage of the "Curieux," and the prompt measures of the Admiralty

* Creasy's *Invasions of England*, p. 249.

in acting on Nelson's information. On the 15th of July, Admiral Stirling effected a junction with Sir Robert Calder before Ferrol, when the latter stood out to sea with fifteen line-of-battle ships, on the look-out for the enemy. Hardly had Sir Robert reached the appointed station, off Cape Finisterre, when he came into the neighbourhood of the combined fleet of France and Spain, which consisted of twenty line-of-battle ships, a fifty gun ship, and seven frigates. The English had but fifteen ships of the line.

On the 22nd of July, three days after Lord Nelson had reached Gibraltar, on his return from the West Indies, the hostile fleets came into collision.

The weather being hazy they approached so closely that they almost encountered before they were aware of each other's vicinity. An action immediately ensued, by the British Admiral making the signal as soon as he descried the hostile fleet, and was fought by him with skill, intrepidity, and

judgment, although some confusion was caused through the English squadron being obliged to tack before they could get at the enemy, and by the fog which brought the two fleets into collision with some want of order. Calder captured two Spanish ships of the line, the *St. Raphael* and *Firme*. Notwithstanding the inequality of the force and other adverse circumstances, the superiority of the English was soon apparent. After four hours cannonading, the engagement was broken off; the weather continuing so foggy that the English ships could not discern the vessels a-head or a-stern of them. It therefore became impossible to manœuvre with any effect. The wind and weather had however during the day been highly favourable to the enemy.*

The British fleet had suffered some loss, particularly in the *Windsor Castle*, which was so crippled in the action that she was obliged to be taken in tow by a line-of-battle ship; and the fleet then, carrying the cap-

* *Annual Register* for 1805, p. 230.

tured vessels, lay-to for the night, and for necessary repairs against the next morning ; it arrived ; Villeneuve, although he seemed disposed to renew the action, and had the advantage of the wind in his favour, never approached nearer to the British line than four leagues. Calder constantly kept up such a course as would best protect his own injured ship (the Windsor Castle) and his two prizes. Often in the course of that day the combined squadron hove up in the order of battle, and as often hauled their wind upon perceiving no disposition on the part of the English Admiral to flinch from a renewal of the engagement. At night the fleets were six leagues asunder, and on the break of day on the 24th the enemy were steering away, and kept their course until they could no longer be distinguished.*

It appears that Villeneuve, dispirited by his failure, determined to proceed to Cadiz. The aide-de-camp of Napoleon, General Lauriston, remonstrated vehemently against

* Annual Register for 1805, p. 230.

this abandonment of their Imperial master's plans; and the combined fleet in consequence ran for Vigo, and entered Ferrol on the 2nd of August, where Villeneuve strengthened his force by the junction of five French and ten Spanish ships blockaded there; but it was not till the 10th that his ships, which had required to be refitted, were again ready for sea.

This juncture of Villeneuve with the Ferrol squadron had been, with remarkable foresight, anticipated by Calder, as well as the probable one with the Rochfort squadron, which had already put to sea, and he wisely considered that the probability of these contingencies, with the weakness of his force and its disabled state, justified him falling back on the support of the Channel fleet or that of Lord Nelson.

This victory, although nothing remarkable in its details, was in its results perhaps the most important ever achieved by the navy of England, glorious as it was by the most splendid achievements. The loss sustained

on our part was trifling—thirty-nine killed and one hundred and fifty wounded; the French and Spaniards lost four hundred and twenty-six, besides the two Spanish line-of-battle ships made prizes of by the English Admiral.

The importance of this engagement will be best understood by the effect it produced on Napoleon when he received intelligence of it, on the 11th of August, and which he appears to have obtained through the English newspapers.

The account is furnished on the authority of Count Daru, his private secretary.*

“Daru found him transported with rage; walking up and down the room with hurried steps, and only breaking a stern silence by broken exclamations: ‘What a navy!—what sacrifices for nothing!—what an admiral!—all hope is gone. That Villeneuve, instead of entering the Channel, has taken refuge in

* *Dupin's Force Navale de l'Angleterre*, i. p. 244; and see the authorities cited in Alison's *Europe*, vol. ix. p. 64.

Ferrol! It is all over; he will be blockaded there. Daru, sit down and write.' The fact was, that on that morning the Emperor had received intelligence of the arrival of Villeneuve in that Spanish harbour! *He at once saw that the English expedition was blown up, the immense expenditure of the flotilla lost for a time, perhaps for ever!* Then in the transports of a fury that would have entirely overturned the judgment of any other man, he adopted one of the boldest resolutions, and traced the plan of one of the most admirable achievements that any conqueror ever conceived."*—The plan of the campaign of Austerlitz was then dictated without a moment's hesitation! It was thus out of the very dregs of his most humiliating defeat, the creative power of Napoleon's genius raised up one of the most glorious of his many glorious triumphs.

The imagination staggers under the conception of Napoleon pacing his room like a chafed lion bearded in his den—uttering

* Alison, vol. ix. p. 64. 7th Ed.

passionate soliloquies, and fierce invectives one moment; and in the next calmly and deliberately dictating to his scared secretary a plan which embraced the simultaneous departure of his scattered troops—their order of march—their lines of conveyance—their combinations and places of rendezvous—in a word all the complicated details of a campaign, which was to end in a victory of which Frenchmen will and must be proud of to the end of time, as one of the greatest achievement of their mighty arms. With such consummate wisdom, foresight and skill was this plan concocted, that it was carried into complete execution, with scarcely an alteration of importance. The result was that Napoleon immediately issued orders for the breaking up of the flotilla at Boulogne. The English, contented with the voluntary departure of so formidable a foe, made no attempt to prevent its dispersion, and of all the vast assemblage of troops, a reserve only of twenty thousand men remained at Boulogne. Thus was abandoned the Emperor's design against

Great Britain, and in the month of September "the Army of England" left the heights above the harbour, to reap the glories so long promised on the opposite shore, on the distant plains of Austria. So ended the last and greatest peril of England, from the threatened invasion of 1805, and which was to have been effected by the greatest combination of military and naval force ever brought together to bear on one point in modern times; conceived with the greatest genius, planned with the most consummate powers of organization, and conducted through all its manifold complications with the most profound skill and military tactics. That it ended ignominiously was rather the result of unlooked-for circumstances; but it is to Sir Robert Calder that this country is indebted for the event which diverted the great Napoleon from his destructive purpose.

The importance of Sir Robert Calder's victory, we have already seen; gallant in its achievement, prudent in its management, temperate in its triumphs, and magnificent

in its result. We can only judge of what the gratitude of England *ought* to have been, by the rage and discomfiture which it occasioned her Imperial foe.

It is however a stigma on our national character, that the gallant Admiral, who had by his daring and successful attack defeated the most perfectly concocted scheme for our destruction, became the mark of public hatred and contumely ; instead of a vote from both Houses of Parliament, a peerage and a pension, which had been so fitly and so generously bestowed on Jervis, Nelson, and Duncan, the only reward Calder got for his services was—a Court-martial, and a severe reprimand.

The intelligence of the engagement off Cape Finisterre, on the 23rd of July, was at first welcomed throughout England with the most extravagant demonstrations of joy. But a change came over the public mind, and that not from any ungrateful feeling or want of appreciation of what was really accomplished, but from a misapprehension that more might and ought to have been done. The Admiral's

dispatches communicating the victory, as well as the oral report of the officer who brought them, raised the expectation that the action would have been continued on the following day ; and it was conceived, that *had* it been, as the enemy was already beaten, his total destruction must have been inevitable. When it was therefore known that the hostile fleets did not on the morrow renew the engagement — that the shattered squadrons of the French and Spanish fleets, had gained without resistance a Spanish port, and that Napoleon, in his official accounts of the engagement, (which were entirely fabricated by himself, he being his own penny-a-liner,) had claimed the victory, on the part of the French — the tide of popular feeling turned from exultation to the most bitter feeling of disappointment and irritation. Sir Robert Calder returned to England for the purpose of demanding an investigation of his conduct, and he was accordingly tried by a Court-martial in Portsmouth Harbour, on the 22nd of December.*

* Annual Register for 1805, p. 231.

On that occasion, Sir Robert had to appear before his brother officers as a culprit, and as such to receive the sentence of the Court, which was to the effect, "that the charges against the said Admiral Sir Robert Calder on the above days (the 23rd and 24th of July, the days succeeding the action,) in presence of the enemy, which it was his duty to engage, *are fully proved*. The Court are of opinion that such conduct on the part of Sir Robert Calder was not the result of cowardice or disaffection, but of error in judgment, for which he deserves to be severely reprimanded—and he is hereby severely reprimanded accordingly."

"Upon the sentence being pronounced, Sir Robert Calder appeared deeply affected—he turned round and retired without a word. He was accompanied by a great number of friends, and, on descending from the deck of the Prince of Wales into his barge, scarcely lifted up his head, which was apparently bowed down by the weight of the sentence pronounced upon him. He is in his 60th

year, forty-six of which he has passed in the service of his country.”*

While England was thus rewarding her earthly saviour by a humiliating trial, in which he was indeed acquitted of cowardice and rebellion, but his professional reputation blasted for life, we shall see what a distinguished French writer says of him and his brilliant achievement.

“Admiral Calder, with an inferior force, meets the Franco-Spanish fleet; in the chase of it he brings on a partial engagement and captures two ships. He is tried and reprimanded because it is believed that had he renewed the action he would have obtained a more decisive victory. *What would they have done in England if he had commanded the superior fleet, and had lost two ships in avoiding an engagement which presented so favourable a chance to skill and valour?*”†

Before leaving a subject which reflects

* Ibid Chronicle, p. 436.

† Dupin, *Voyages dans la Grande Bretagne*, vol. ii. p. 17.

equal discredit on the popular feeling and the naval administration of the time, it may be mentioned that there was a most unfortunate suppression in Calder's despatches (whether accidentally or designedly has not been shewn), which, if it had been published, would probably have prevented the public discontent, and with it the ignominious treatment of the gallant Admiral. It is now quite clear that the safety of England imperatively demanded his retiring without renewing the engagement. The defence made by the Admiral is given in the "Appendix to the Chronicle" of the Annual Register of 1805, p. 564, and it will be found deeply interesting to those who yet feel sympathy for a brave and meritorious sailor, to whom posterity, it is hoped, will do greater justice than he received from his own generation.

Truly does Sir Archibald Alison observe, "Such in its first and hasty fits is public opinion! History would indeed be useless if the justice of posterity did not often reverse

its iniquitous decrees.”* Sir Walter Scott adds his impartial testimony: “A court-martial, ratified to a certain extent the popular opinion; though it may be doubted whether impartial posterity will concur in the justice of the censure passed upon the gallant Admiral. At any other period of our naval history, the action of the 28th of July would have been rated as a distinguished victory.”†

There can be no doubt but that Sir Robert Calder was made the victim of popular clamour; but was public clamour *only* to blame? What share of the injustice had the officers composing the Court-martial? What share had the two Houses of Parliament, who permitted the outrage and made no amends for it? What share had the Sovereign, “the fountain of honour,” who eringed to the “many-headed monster,” and kept back the honours which were not only his due but which would have redeemed his fame?

* Alison's History of Europe, vol. ix. p. 66.

† Scott's Life of Napoleon Bonaparte, vol. v. p. 241.

Before closing the subject of this the most elaborately-planned expedition ever conceived against the existence of this nation, a few words may not be out of place as to Napoleon being really in earnest in respect to the invasion. We have already seen that Bourrienne, his private secretary, fairly laughs at our simplicity in believing that he was. On the other hand, we have the proofs of the vast preparations, extending beyond two years and a half, involving not only the most prodigious cost, but thought and labour of an incalculable amount. The invasion of England was, at all times, the twenty-thousand prize which every French officer and soldier was to draw in the lottery of war. Not only were the vast resources of the French nation taxed to the uttermost, but those of her allies, or rather dependencies; and we have the repeated declaration of Napoleon as to the sincerity of his intentions, and the practicability of them. On the authority of Mr. O'Meara,* we have from

* "Napoleon in Exile, or a Voice from St. Helena," vol. i. pp. 350, 459.

the lips of Napoleon himself not only what those intentions were—to land with his one hundred and fifty thousand men in England—but what he intended to do when he got there. It is really very pleasant, at this distance of time, to hear the dangers we have escaped from!—Although, strange to say, England has encountered some of those very dangers which Napoleon threatened—Parliamentary Reform being one of them—without the gentle stimulus of one hundred and fifty thousand foreign bayonets.

On the authority of Thiers, we are assured that the enterprize was, in the eyes of discerning judges—we *presume* French judges—no chimera, but perfectly practicable, as Napoleon had planned it, and although unfinished, will do him more honour than his most brilliant successes. “Neither was it a mere feint, as it has been supposed by some people” (and we must include Monsieur M. de Bourrienne, private Secretary to the Emperor amongst them) “who discover depths where there are none. Some thousands of letters of

the ministers put an end to all doubt on that point. It was a serious enterprize, followed up and matured for several years with a real passion.* Napoleon's positive opinion was, that if his army had once disembarked, "England would be no more." In this sanguine prophecy (which he wrote to Admiral Decrès, on the evening of the memorable 3rd of August,) he is backed by M. Thiers, and nearly every French historian, and we shall find not without some plausible grounds.

We are now following O'Meara's authority, to see what Napoleon actually intended for us—the mere sack of London, and the filling of his soldiers' knapsacks with "the gold and silver from the cellars of London," and the shops of the tradesmen, and the mansions of our nobility, does not appear to be the burglarious design of the great Emperor; that was a mere bait for his hungry troops; he was about to give us a new constitution, new laws—a republic instead of a monarchy—

* History of the Consulate and Empire.

and other blessings besides. It seems rather inconsistent that this omnipotent dictator, just after having overthrown a republic, and set up a monarchy, himself at the head of it, should in his career of conquest, next propose to upset a monarchy and establish a republic on its ruins ! However, we don't know the full extent of our escape, until we have seen what was the whole of the Emperor's plan :

"I would have hurried over my flotilla, with two hundred thousand men, landed as near Chatham as possible, and proceeded direct to London, where I calculated upon arriving in four days from the time of my landing. I would *have proclaimed a republic, the abolition of the nobility and the House of Peers, the distribution of the property of such of the latter as opposed me, among my partisans ; liberty, equality, and the sovereignty of the people.* I would have allowed the House of Commons, but would have introduced a great reform," (surely after abolishing the throne, and the house of peers, this sounds something like an anti-climax.)

“I would have published a proclamation, declaring that we came as friends to the English, and to free the nation from a corrupt and flagitious aristocracy, and restore a popular form of government, a democracy, all which would have been confirmed by the conduct of my army, as I would not have allowed the slightest outrage to be committed by my troops.” (That seems not quite good faith with the troops, which he himself had promised “to lead to London, whose cellars “were filled with gold and silver—and who “were to return with him to France, loaded “with guineas, which they were to spend at “home with their mistresses.”)

Whether Napoleon was sincere or not, in saying that he would not have allowed any outrage on the part of his troops, we have no means of testing; but we have every reason to believe, that they would have been more *his* master, than he theirs. What we might expect from a French invading army, when enjoying the licence of conquerors in a conquered land, we may form some idea, by the

conduct of their predecessors in Egypt. "The fate of the people, for whose happiness we, no doubt, came to Egypt, was no better. If, at our approach, terror made them leave their houses, they found on their return nothing but the mud of which the walls were composed; utensils, ploughs, gates, roofs, everything served as fuel to boil our soup; their pots were broken, their grain was eaten, their fowls and pigeons roasted, and nothing was left but the carcasses of their dogs, when they defended the property of their masters. If we remained in their villages, the wretches were summoned to return, under pain of being treated as rebels, and in consequence double taxed, and when they yielded to these menaces and came to pay their tax, it sometimes happened that from their great number they were taken for a body of revolters, their sticks for arms, and they received some discharges of musketry before there was time for explaining the mistake; the dead were interred, and we remained friends until a safe opportunity for revenge occurred. It

is true, that when they staid at home, paid the tax, and supplied all the wants of the the army, they were saved the trouble of a journey to a residence in the desert, saw their provisions consumed with regularity, and were allowed a part of them, preserved some of their goods, sold their eggs to the soldiers, *and had but few of their wives and daughters violated.*"*

"Such was the treatment which Egypt experienced; a country which the French were desirous to possess, and to conciliate; very different is their design upon Great Britain, which it is their avowed intention to ravage, plunder, and destroy."†

If any admirer of French organization believes that the French army has improved in its *morale* since its benign protection of Egypt, let him read the following extract—we dare not give the whole of the horrible details—of the attack of the French upon an

* Denon's Travels in Egypt, vol. 1. 9th ed. p. 256, &c.

† Vide Broad-sides, Library, British Museum.

Arab village, during one of the campaigns in Algeria—

“One vast sheet of flame crowned the height, which an hour or two before was ornamented with an extensive and opulent village, crowded with inhabitants. It seemed to have been the emporium of the Bene Abbés, fabrics of gunpowder, of arms, of haiks, burnouses, and different stuffs were made. The streets boasted of different shops of workers in silver, workers in cords, vendors of silks, and other stuffs and articles of French or Tunisian manufacture, brought by their traders from Algiers or Tunis. All that was not borne away by the spoilers was devoured by fire, or buried amidst the crashing ruins; and then the hungry flames vomited forth from the burning habitations, gained the tall corn growing around the village, and running swiftly on, wound about and consumed the scattered olive trees overshadowing it. Fire covered the face of the country, and the heavens were obscured with

smoke. The soldiers pronounced the country *joliment nettoyé*; and I heard two ruffians, after the sacking was over, relating with great gusto how many young girls had been burnt in one house, after being abused by their brutal comrades and themselves. They pronounced the house *joliment nettoyé* also. Indeed, it was a very favourite phrase with them.”*

Napoleon pays us the highest possible compliment when he confesses what classes they were from which he expected a welcome on these shores. “I think that between my promises, and what I would actually have effected, I should have had the support of a great many. In a large city like London, where there are so many *canaille*, and so many disaffected, I should have been joined by a formidable body; and I could at the same time have created an insurrection in Ireland.”†

At another time, he is reported by the

* Borrer, Campaign in the Kabylie.

† Voice from St. Helena, i. 349, 332.

same authority to have said, "I would not have attempted to subject England to France; I could not have united two nations so dissimilar. If I had succeeded in my project, I would have abolished the monarchy, and established a republic, instead of the oligarchy by which you are governed. I would have separated Ireland from England, and left them to themselves, after having sown the seeds of republicanism in their *morale*. I would have allowed the House of Commons to have remained, but would have introduced a great reform."*

We have from Napoleon's own ingenuous confession, who his supporters would have been in his burglarious attempt on our liberties: "A general equalization of property would have gained me the support of the *canaille*, and all the idle, profligate, and disaffected in the kingdom."† Certainly, there was a vast amount of candour about Napoleon, with all the unrivalled power of

* Ibid. pp. 350, 489.

† Ibid.

dissimulation which his greatest admirers have conceded to him.

.. Napoleon, however, was the last to admit that the total failure of his darling project arose from his own want of foresight, or by any human agency. "And yet the obstacles which made me (he said to Las Casas,) fail were not of human origin—they were the work of the elements. In the south the sea ruined my plans: in the north, it was the conflagration of Moscow, the snows and the ice that destroyed me. Thus water, air, fire, all nature in short, have been the enemies of an universal regeneration, commanded by Nature herself. The problems of Providence are inscrutable."*

If Napoleon could have read Nature rightly, he would have perceived in her indignant refusal to carry out his designs, the Power that directs the operations of Nature against the puny efforts of even the mightiest of conquerors. It was a bold conception of

* Las Casas, "*Memorial de St. Helène*," tom i. part 2. p. 278.

his to read in the face of insulted Nature her determination to oppose him—to regard the elements as deadly enemies arrayed in fearful force against him; to see water, air, fire, all refusing to acknowledge him as their Master; but he wanted the faith, or had not the manliness to acknowledge that Nature herself is but the handmaid of Him to whom she owes her origin, and whose word she implicitly fulfils, whether it be to let loose the avalanche from its mountain fastnesses to ravage the plain below, or to direct the dew-drop to fall in the chalice of “the meanest flower.”

He might have remembered the challenge of Nature’s Master, “Canst *thou* bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?” or, when he arranged Nature, have remembered *Who* it is that saith to the snow, “Be thou on the earth, likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength.”*

Speaking of this conversation with Las Casas at St. Helena, Bourrienne observes that

* Job, ch. xxxvii. v. 6.

it is very different from what he has himself narrated. "He (Napoleon) speaks of a French battle which would have decided the fate of England." "I should not have entered England," he said at St. Helena, "as a conqueror but a liberator." "Bonaparte knew better than any one, the difficulty of subduing a strong, powerful and united nation. Some years after these feigned preparations against England, he had evidence of the truth written in characters of blood, in Spain—a combination of natural causes is always ruinous to the invading army. *Napoleon must always have been jesting at St. Helena, when he said that four days would have enabled him to reach London, and that Nature had made England one of our islands, like Oleron or Corsica. I find these words in my notes, 'Remained with the First Consul from half past eleven to one o'clock.'* During this hour and a half he said not a word, bearing any resemblance to his assertions at St. Helena."*

* Bourrienne, *Private Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte*, vol. ii. 474, *note*.

The reference made by Bourrienne is to an astounding assertion of Bonaparte, reported by Las Casas : " England must have ended by becoming an appendage to the France of *my* system, Nature has made it one of our islands, as well as Oleron and Corsica."*

Englishmen may well smile at the solidity of a conquest, which was to be " backed up " by the rabble, the idlers, profligates, and disaffected ; but a more thoughtful mind, less dazzled by its own conceptions, has put the question of Napoleon's success on more plausible, if not more convincing grounds.

" Supposing Napoleon to have once effected a landing at Dover, we do not affront the English nation in believing that it would have been vanquished by the army and the Captain, who in eighteen months conquered and subjected Austria, Germany, Prussia and Russia. Not a man was added to the ocean army, which at Austerlitz, at Jena, and at Friedland, beat the 800,000 soldiers of the Continent. It must be added, too,

* Las Casas, tom. ii. part 3, p. 335.

that *the territorial inviolability so long enjoyed by England, has not familiarised her with the dangers of invasion ; or tested her means and courage to repel it ;* a circumstance which by no means diminishes the glories of her fleets and regular armies. It is therefore very improbable that she would have successfully withstood the soldiers of Napoleon not yet exhausted by fatigue, and not yet decimated by war. An heroic resolution of her Government, taking refuge for instance in Scotland and leaving England to be ravaged" (Napoleon has assured us he would not have permitted "the slightest outrage" by his troops) "until Nelson with the English squadrons, could come and cut off all retreat from Napoleon ; such a resolution, exposing Napoleon the conqueror to be made a prisoner in his own proper conquest, would doubtless have brought about some singular conjunctures ; but it is beyond all probability to suppose that it would have been adopted. We are firmly persuaded that had Napoleon

reached London, England would have treated.”*

It will naturally be thought that the above is from the French point of view, and that a Frenchman, with the pardonable prejudice in favour of his country, might see probabilities where an Englishman could find none. We therefore make the following extract from a recent paper in the Quarterly Review, which fairly enough discusses both sides of the question.

“ In attempting to glean from the experience of the past such facts as may tend to throw light on the probabilities of the success of any future invasion of this country, there is little advantage to be derived from looking farther back than the threatened descent on our shores by the First Napoleon in the year 1804-5. His attempt was planned in the plenitude of his political and intellectual power; and considering who it was that designed it, and the means he had at his command for carrying it through, it is

* Thiers’ “ History of the Consulate and Empire.”

one of the marvels of the age that it was not successful. Now that we know all the particulars of the proposed campaign 'De Londrès,' there is no difficulty in seeing that it failed, because the French fleets were never able to appear in sufficient force in the Channel to construct the bridge over which the invaders must pass. The plan of the naval campaign was conceived with the most consummate tact, and with ordinary courage and ability might easily have been carried into execution. In that case it would have been easy for the French to have mustered in the Channel a line of battle, exceeding by at least one half, both in number of ships and weight of metal what the English could have opposed to them. The British Admiral must either have accepted battle under such circumstances as would have rendered defeat almost inevitable, or he must have retired to be blockaded in Spithead till reinforcements enabled him to meet the enemy on equal terms. In either case Napoleon's object would have been gained. The Channel would

have been bridged ; England would have been joined to the Continent ; and his army might have been taken over with as great or even greater facility than it could have passed the Rhine, or any large river. Whether the campaign that followed, would have resembled those of Moscow or Leipsic, or those of Austerlitz or Jena must remain a mere matter of speculation ; but he is a bold man who would assert that so consummate a commander, at such a period of his career, should deliberately have planned, and so long adhered to the execution of a scheme which did not offer at least a reasonable chance of success. The one point on which we as Englishmen may fancy ourselves entitled to suspect that he miscalculated his means was, in his ignorance at that time of the power of resistance of the British soldier, and the desperate courage with which he would certainly have fought on his native soil. Still, looking at the genius of Napoleon and the incompetency of those to whom the British army would have been entrusted, it

is highly probable that the result would have been as at Borodino, and that London must have fallen. But even then, Englishmen may be permitted to doubt whether the fall of the capital would have ended the campaign, and secured the objects of invasion. With 600,000 men in arms on shore, and a considerable fleet still at sea, it is then that the real work of the campaign would have begun ; and in the struggle for existence, it is not permitted for us to doubt what would have been the ultimate result of the war. It is comparatively easy to strike a mortal blow at so highly organized a power as Prussia. In a country where the government is everything and the people nothing, where no man thinks or acts but at the bidding of another, one blow is sufficient to crumble the complicated fabric to pieces. But if there is any virtue in our boasted free institutions and power of self-government, it is here that they would come into play. Every community, every corporation, and every county, would have become a self-defending

unit. Even if the King and Parliament were prisoners in France, and the conquest had been for the moment accomplished, the thorough subjugation of the kingdom might have outmatched even the genius of a Napoleon.”*

In respect to the chances which England had in her favour of defending herself successfully, we have the opinion of Sir Walter Scott, in the following temperately expressed judgment :

“ We are willing to acknowledge that the risk must have been dreadful, and that Buonaparte, with his genius and his army, must have inflicted severe calamities upon a country which had so long enjoyed the blessings of peace. But the people were unanimous in their purpose of defence, and their forces composed of materials to which Buonaparte did more justice when he came to be better acquainted with them. Of the three British nations, the English have since shewn themselves possessed of the same

* Quarterly Review, No. 211, pp. 257-9.

steady valour which won the fields of Cressy and Agincourt, Blenheim and Minden ; the Irish have not lost the fiery enthusiasm which has distinguished them in all the countries of Europe ; nor have the Scots degenerated from the stubborn courage with which their ancestors for two thousand years maintained their independence against a superior enemy. Even if London had been lost, we would not, under so great a calamity, have despaired of the freedom of the country ; for the war would, in all probability, have assumed that popular and national character which sooner or later wears out an invading army. Neither does the confidence with which Buonaparte affirms the conviction of his winning the first battle appear so certainly well founded. This, at least, we know, that the resolution of the country was fully bent up to the hazard ; and those who remember the period will bear us witness that the desire that the French would make the attempt, was a general feeling through all classes, because they had every reason to

hope that the issue might be such as for ever to silence the threat of invasion." *

Whatever may have been the practicability of Napoleon landing on our shores—and we have already shewn, from the previous experiment at Fishguard, that it was not, after all, such a very difficult matter—we firmly believe one thing, that had Napoleon landed with his hundred and fifty thousand men, not one would have got back to France to tell the tale ! It would not have been the regular troops ; no—nor the militia, nor stalwart yeomanry, nor levy *en masse*, nor the three or four hundred thousands of volunteers, that would have done the business—although we doubt not but that they would have done their part ; but the heart and soul of the universal land—of all England itself, with its fifteen millions burning “like one,” would have vibrated with one common impulse, to expel the invaders. Every Englishman would have risen to a man, and defended his throne, his soil, his

* Scott, *Life*, &c., vol. v. pp. 94, 95.

hearth, his home, and the domestic ties which made it precious, from the polluting foot, and yet more polluting arm, of the French marauder. NOT ONE FRENCHMAN WOULD HAVE ESCAPED ALIVE—not Napoleon himself, if he had had “a thousand lives.” England’s “great revenge would have stomach for much more.” No need for Nelson and his brave blue jackets to have cut off the retreat of the invader—no help would have been necessary from *without*—England would have been true to herself from *WITHIN*; and while she continues such, she has no need to fear the threat of any invader—though hundreds of thousands of hostile bayonets may be bristling and gleaming in the morning light on her shores—as long as she has as many rifles to meet them, and those rifles are borne by her own brave and undaunted sons.

CHAPTER IX.

Means taken by England for its defence—Embargo on French vessels—Seizure of English persons in retaliation—Defensive preparations—Military strength of England—*The levy en masse*—The nation becomes a camp—The King places himself at the head of his troops, and the Prince of Wales solicits being placed in active service—National spirit displayed—Magnificent attitude of England—Universal feeling of patriotism—Naval preparations—Corresponding menaces on the part of the French—Admirable organization of their invading army—Meeting of the City of London—Admirable feelings excited by the Invasion—"The General Fast"—The Volunteers reviewed in Hyde Park by the King in person—Presentation of colours by the Prince of Wales—Presentation of colours to the Queen's Royal Volunteers by the Countess of Harrington—Presentation by the Lord Mayor of the colours to the Loyal London Volunteers—Estimation of the Volunteers at that period.

WE are now to trace the feelings produced on the English nation, and the means taken

for its defence, on the renewal of hostilities after the hollow truce of Amiens had ended.

It will be remembered that the English had laid an embargo on all French vessels in their ports, which is strictly justifiable in warfare; and the loss to France was considerable. Bonaparte, however, took reprisals by a course which could not, and can never be justified. He seized on the persons of all the English of all ranks, conditions, and ages, who were then in Paris, or in any other part of his dominions. The flimsy pretext for this outrage on the law of nations was, that some of these unfortunate people, might, had they been permitted to return to England, have been liable to serve in the militia ! It seems this dastardly and cowardly stretch of arbitrary power is entirely due to Napoleon himself, and was not in any way attributable to his ministry. It was the spiteful malevolence of a temper rendered overbearing by a continued career of prosperity, and lashed into phrenzy by anything that opposed it. For twelve years were these in-

nocent but unfortunate individuals cut off from their country, their homes, and their families. "The most tender bonds of affection were broken asunder by this despotic sentence of imprisonment; the most fatal inroads were made on family feelings and affections, by this long separation between children, and husbands, and wives—all the nearest and dearest domestic relations." *

It must be admitted that England was never less prepared for an invasion, than at this critical point of her history—the sudden termination of the peace of Amejens. Her great enemy had with the combined force of his giant intellect, and the mighty resources of his empire, resolved to crush her, and render her "the Niobe of Nations."

England, although taken at a disadvantage, was not confounded, and she set to work for her defence, with an energy which was worthy of her acknowledged rank amongst the nations; and she prepared for her struggle accordingly. To one hundred and

* Scott, *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*, vol. v. p. 78.

thirty thousand of troops of the line already voted, were added eighty thousand of militia, who were called out on the 25th of March, 1803, and who were scarcely if at all inferior in point of discipline to the regular army. In a subsequent chapter will be found ample details of the proceedings taken by Parliament in this critical state of the country; the raising of an army of reserve of 50,000 men, and immediately following that energetic measure, the still more striking and unusual one, of the *levy en masse*, by which strictly constitutional, though rarely exercised, right of the Crown, all the male part of the population of the kingdom, between seventeen and fifty-five years of age were rendered in time of invasion liable to be enrolled and drafted into regiments according to their ages and stations in life. This bold stroke could not therefore be considered as a mere adjunct to the military force of the country, it was, in effect, the rising up of the country itself in arms. All persons, however, who were members of any volunteer *corps* approved by

the King, were exempted from the levy *en masse*. The natural effect of which exemption was to swell the volunteer corps to an unprecedented extent. "In a few weeks, three hundred thousand men were enrolled, armed and disciplined in the different parts of the kingdom, and the compulsory conscription fell to the ground,"* simply because it was needless.

Thus, as if by the wand of a magician, the whole land became converted into one immense camp, "the whole nation into soldiers, and the good old King himself into a general-in-chief."†

The King (George III.) had previously declared his intention, that in the event of the enemy landing, he would put himself at the head of his troops. Even his son, the sybarite Prince of Wales, awoke from his dream of pleasure and sensual enjoyment, and most earnestly solicited to be allowed to

* Alison, *Hist. Europe*, vol. viii. p. 284.

† Sir Walter Scott's *Life of Napoleon*, vol. v. p. 86, from which many of the details in the text are taken.

go into active service. As George the Fourth has not many redeeming features which recommend him to the nation's grateful memory, we may quote here his letter to the King, renewing his request.

"Whatever," (wrote the Prince of Wales in his letter to his royal father, dated August 3, 1801), "may some time back have been your Majesty's objections to my being in the way of active service; yet, at a crisis like this, unexampled in our history, when every subject in the realm is eagerly seeking for, and has his post assigned to him, those objections will, I humbly trust, yield to the pressure of the times, and that your Majesty will be graciously pleased to call me to a station wherein I may prove myself worthy of the confidence of my country, and of the high rank I hold in it, by staking my life in its defence. Death would be preferable to being marked as the only man in the country who cannot be supposed to come forth on such an occasion. Should it be my fate to fall in so glorious a contest, no injury could

arise to the line of the succession, on account of the number happily remaining of your Majesty's children. But were there fifty princes, or only one, it would, in my humble opinion, be equally incumbent on them to stand foremost in the ranks of danger, at so decisive a period as the present."

The immense force that thus started, at once into life, vigour and action, necessarily embraced every class and profession—from the king on the throne to the yeoman on the hedge side—every citizen was called to enroll himself in defence of his country, and the call did not fall on unwilling or reluctant ears, for four hundred and ten thousand men responded to it.

Not only was there by this truly national demonstration a powerful reserve of trained men given to our regular army, but what was infinitely of greater importance, a spirit of ardent patriotism ran through the isles, and thus was the train fired of that military spirit which, although it has often slumbered, is never totally extinct in the mighty heart of

England, and which, in the course of ten or a dozen years enabled her not only to retain her supremacy of the sea, but even to contest with the conqueror of Europe on the element which, up to this time, he had seemed to be invincible.

The voice of Peace was for a moment hushed, and only that which called upon Englishmen to defend their most precious inheritances was listened to—it resounded in the chambers of the legislature—party distinctions, which never ran higher than at that period, were lost in the grander consideration of patriotism—the popular feeling gave its utterances through the ordinary vent of public meetings—it was echoed in our theatres—nay, the very pulpits preached the most fervent spirit of patriotism, and kindled in the hearts of their congregations the most indomitable feelings to defend their homes, their altars, and their dearest domestic ties.

In every prominent position beacons were erected, communicating with each other, not only along the coasts, but through the very

heart of the island, and every eye was directed to the signal post which was to indicate when the moment of danger had arrived.

Magnificent and sublime was the attitude which "the nation of shopkeepers," as her arch enemy had sneeringly called her, assumed at this moment. "The King had everything arranged for the specific invasion. He was to go himself to Chelmsford or Dartford; the Queen and the Royal family, with the treasure, were to be sent to Worcester; the artillery and stores, from Woolwich, to be sent into the interior by the Great Junction Canal. In the great approaching conflict every one had his post assigned to him." *

"In the multitudes who now thronged to the standards of their country were to be seen men of all ranks—from the Prince of the blood to the labourer of the soil. The

* The above passage is omitted in the 7th edition of *Alison* (vol. viii. p. 284), but in other editions precedes what immediately follows.

merchant left his counting-house ; the lawyer his briefs ; the farmer paused amidst the labours of husbandry ; the artizan in the toils of his handicraft ; the nobleman hurried from the scene of dissipation or amusement ; the country gentleman was to be seen at the head of his tenantry. Everywhere were to be seen uniforms, squadrons, battalions ; the clang of artillery was heard in the streets ; the trampling of cavalry resounded in the fields. Instead of the peasant reposing at sunset in front of his cottage, he was to be seen hurrying, with his musket on his shoulder, to his rallying point. Instead of the nobleman wasting his youth in the ignoble pleasures of the metropolis, he was to be found inhaling a nobler spirit amidst the ranks of his rural dependents. In the general excitement even the voice of faction was stilled, the heart-burnings and divisions on the origin of the war were forgotten ; the Whigs stood beside the Tories, from being a war of opinions, the contest had become one of nations ; and excepting a few invete-

rate leaders of party, one feeling seemed to pervade the whole British Empire." *

While her provisions against attack by land were of this enthusiastic and extensive description, England exerted her utmost to maintain the ancient supremacy with which both tradition and song had long told her, "she ruled the waves."

Nelson was, we have seen, intrusted with the command of the Mediterranean fleet; Lord Keith set out for Plymouth; Sir Sydney Smith received orders to put to sea with a squadron of observation; a hot press took place in the Thames; sixteen ships were instantly put in commission. The public ardour rose to the highest pitch; and England resumed her arms with a degree of enthusiasm exceeding even that with which she had laid them aside. †

"An impulse of the most generous, the most animating, the most inextinguishable hope was excited in every heart, which was

* Alison, *Hist. Europe*, vol. viii. p. 284.

† Alison's *History of Europe*.

not withered by faction, or corrupted by a false and foul philosophy, even to rottenness. There were such among us, but they were not numerous; and for a while the general and ebullient feeling with which all England overflowed imposed silence upon the lying lips. Even now it is delightful to look back on that exhilarating time, when after so long and unmitigated a season, hope came like the first breath of summer; when we met with gladness in every countenance, congratulation in every voice, sympathy in every heart, and every man felt prouder than in all former times of the name of Englishman, of the part which his country had acted, and was still called upon to act.”*

In respect to the French, it has been said by a competent authority that, “The organization of this force and the discipline of the troops were so studiously adjusted, that *it was proved by experiment, that a hundred thousand men with three hundred pieces of cannon, and their whole caissons and equipage*

* Quarterly Review, vol. xvi. p. 236.

could find their places in less than half an hour."

"In the course of the year, 1803, there were collected at Boulogne and the adjoining ports 1300 vessels of the above description; capable of carrying 8000 pieces of heavy cannon, besides lighter guns. It was calculated that a hundred or more of these crafts, containing 10,000 or 15,000 men, might be sunk by the English men-of-war, but, said Napoleon, truly enough, "you lose a greater number every day in a single battle; and *what battle ever promised such results as the invasion and conquest of England.*"*

Preparations on the most gigantic scale to resist the enemy were made; 50,000 seamen, including 12,000 marines, had been voted, and 10,000 more when war appeared inevitable.

Our dockyards became replete with life and activity; seventy-five ships of the line,

* Sir F. B. Head, *Defenceless State of Great Britain*, p. 227.

and two hundred and seventy frigates and smaller vessels were put in commission. The harbours of France and Holland were blockaded. Lord Nelson rode triumphant in the Mediterranean; and excepting when their small craft was stealing around the headlands to the general rendezvous at Buologne, the flag of France disappeared from the ocean.* "She (England) covered the ocean with five hundred and seventy ships of war of various descriptions. Divisions of her fleet blockaded up every French port in the Channel; and the army destined to invade our shores might see the British flag flying in every direction on the horizon, as birds of prey may be seen floating in the air, above the animal they design to pounce upon. Sometimes the British sloops of war stood in and cannonaded or threw shells into Havre, Granville, and Boulogne itself. Sometimes the seamen and marines landed, cut out vessels, destroyed signal-posts, and disabled batteries.†

* Alison, vol. viii. p. 286.

† Scott's Life of Napoleon, vol. v. p. 86.

Nor was France cowed by the extent and completeness of our defences ; the hostility and defiance hurled by the one country, were sent back with equal force by the other.

On the 26th of July, 1803, a national display of British feeling and patriotism, "which the world and posterity must ever contemplate with admiration, was made in a meeting of the merchants, bankers, traders, and other inhabitants" of the metropolis, held at the Royal Exchange. The area was filled with between 4 and 5000 of the most opulent and respectable of the mercantile interests, including those who ranked first in the city of London, both in point of character and wealth, "men whose breath could in an instant raise millions of money, should the service of their country require it." A "Declaration" was then proposed, to the effect that the assembly "make public their unanimous determination to stand or fall with our
ing and country."

"The independence and existence of the British Empire—the safety, the liberty, the

life of every man is at stake. The events, perhaps, of a few months, certainly of a few years, are to determine whether we and our children are to continue freemen and members of the most flourishing community in the world, or whether we are to be the slaves of our most implacable enemies—themselves the slaves of a foreign usurper! We look on this great crisis without dismay. We have the most firm reliance on the spirit and virtue of the people of this country. We believe that there exists a firmer as well as nobler courage than any which rapine can inspire; and we cannot entertain such gloomy and unworthy apprehensions of the moral order of the world, as to think that so admirable a quality can be the exclusive attribute of freebooters or slaves. We fight for our laws and liberties—to defend the dearest hopes of our children—to maintain the unspotted glory which we have inherited from our ancestors—to guard from outrage and shame those whom nature has intrusted to our protection—to preserve the honour and

existence of the country that gave us birth. We fight for that constitution and system of society, which is at once the noblest monument and the firmest bulwark of civilisation ! We fight to preserve the whole earth from the barbarous yoke of military despotism ! We fight for the independence of all nations, even for those who are the most indifferent to our fate, or the most blindly jealous of our prosperity ! In so glorious a cause—in defence of these dearest and most sacred objects ; we trust that the God of our fathers will inspire us with a valour which will be more than equal to the daring ferocity of those who are lured by the hope of plunder, to fight the battle of ambition.

“ His Majesty is about to call upon his people to arm in their own defence. We trust, and we believe, that he will not call upon them in vain—that the freemen of this land, going forth in the righteous cause of their country, under the blessing of Almighty God, will inflict the most signal chastisement on those who have dared to threaten our de-

struction—a chastisement, of which the memory will long guard the shores of this island, and which may not only vindicate the honour, and establish the safety of the empire, but may also to the latest posterity serve as an example to strike terror into tyrants, and to give courage and hope to insulted and oppressed nations.”

“The Declaration” was agreed to without a dissentient voice. “God save the King” and “Rule Britannia” were called for; the whole assembly having given three cheers, the meeting dissolved. Such an expression of zeal, loyalty, and patriotism as was exhibited in this meeting, was perhaps never paralleled in the most glorious era of Greece or Rome, or any other nation under the canopy of Heaven.”*

Happy is the nation that owns such a people, and happy ought that people to have been, that had a Chronicler who recorded their generous feelings, and enthusiastic sen-

* “Chronicle,” *Annual Register* for 1808, p. 413.

timents in such glowing language, and well-turned sentences !

The threatened invasion not only seemed to call forth all the patriotism and loyalty, but all the talent, poetry and chivalrous feeling of the threatened nation.

We may turn to the debates, and we shall find a cluster of names that England now recognises as being amongst the most enlightened of her statesmen, and the most distinguished of her orators, giving vent to the most splendid sentiments, uttered in the most glowing language ; the forum echoes with the most spirit-stirring harangues of Erskine—while from the pulpit, whether in cathedral or conventicle, issued the most lofty appeals, and made even bloodshed, when consecrated by a nation's safety, an attribute of Christianity.

The 19th of August, 1803, was appointed for a General Fast, and it was observed with the greatest solemnity throughout the kingdom. In the metropolis the shops were shut, and all London wore the appearance of

Sunday. The Volunteer corps of London, Westminster, and their environs assembled at their several places of worship, where they received the instruction of appropriate sermons, and the clergy displayed a most laudable zeal, to improve those generous and manly sentiments with which their congregations were inspired.

At St. Paul's Cathedral the Corporation attended, and the Hon. Artillery Company, consisting of upwards of one thousand, the two troops of Loyal London cavalry, and the 3rd troop of Loyal London Volunteers.

At ten they marched from their headquarters, accompanied by the Chaplain to the corps, and their band in a most superb uniform, playing the Duke of York's march. The streets were so extremely crowded, that it was with the greatest difficulty that the troops could reach the Cathedral, and the choir could not hold them when they arrived there. It was also difficult to make a passage for the Lord Mayor, and the rest of the civic functionaries. After the service, the oath of

allegiance was administered to the officers and privates of the 3rd regiment. The London Cavalry, upon their return from St. Paul's, drew up in front of the Mansion House, "where the Lord Mayor uncovered, in company with the Lady Mayoress, and returned their salute; after their horns had sounded 'God save the King,' their officers partook of refreshment at the Mansion House. The first regiment of Loyal London Volunteers, commanded by Colonel Birch, marched to St. Michael's Church, Cornhill, near which the gallant Colonel's well known pastry-cook's shop still stands; his warlike deeds may be forgotten by an ungrateful country, but his turtle soup will

"Long keep his memory *green* in our souls."*

* It was a daughter of the gallant and gastronomic Colonel whom the patriot poet of France—Lamartine, married. His *quasi* military rank seems to have been the cause of a good deal of pleasantry at the time. On a debate in the House of Commons on the 28th of June, 1805, Colonel Crawford dwelt with particular

Among other striking demonstrations on this day, the most remarkable was that of the Queen's Own, or Queen's Royal regiment of Volunteers, who met in a field opposite Sloane Street, and marched to Ranelagh House, where service was performed by the Reverend Messrs. Butler, father and son. After an eloquent discourse, "God save the King" was immediately sung by the whole regiment "in a slow, loud, and truly solemn

severity on the volunteer system, and especially that part of it, "which conferred not only military title, but military rank upon pastry-cooks, and other men of that description who had never seen any service, and whom experienced officers of the line would disdain to serve under." (Annual Register, 1805, page 114.)

We hope, as the nation is fifty-five years older, these absurd prejudices have disappeared from amongst us, and that a man, although he may keep a pastry-cook's shop, will, if called upon by his fellow citizens to lead them in the hour of danger, be looked upon as equally entitled to respect, as if his commission had, instead of its being a free and unsolicited gift, "been regularly bought and paid for," according to the most orthodox system pursued by our "regular" troops.

manner. Many of the spectators were visibly affected. The balconies were crowded with ladies, and the lower boxes with gentlemen. There were about 3000 visitors in all, and the *coup d'oeil* was remarkably grand."

"Such a number of *corps* attended on that day that it is impossible to enumerate them. Every principal church was crowded with the ardent patriots, who fill the voluntary associations; and there can be no doubt that in the present temper of the country, not only every other great city and town, but even the smallest village and hamlet throughout the island evinced a proportionate degree of fervour and animation in the holy cause."*

Amongst other "good men and true" three hundred of the most respectable individuals of the Jewish persuasion, although prohibited by their high priest from attending in our churches during divine service, took the oaths of fidelity and allegiance to their king and country, either in the vestry

* Annual Register (1803), p. 445.

rooms of the different churches, or on the drilling grounds of their respective corps. We hope our fellow-subjects of the Hebrew faith will not forget the example of their fathers and grandfathers.

If the solemn and magnificent demonstration on the General Fast, on the 19th of July, 1803, rendered it a day this country had reason to be proud of, the events which hallowed the 26th, a week afterwards, forms another "red letter" day in our annals. "It presented the sublime spectacle of a monarch who reigned no less distinguished in the hearts of his people than on his throne, meeting the brave citizens of his metropolis armed in defence of his crown and of the British constitution, and with the characteristic virtues of the sons of Albion, resolved to continue free, or gloriously to fall with the liberty and independence of their country. Such a spectacle is worthy of such people; such a people are deserving the blessings they enjoy."*

* Annual Register (1803), p. 446.

The light had scarcely appeared before all London was moving on this auspicious morning to be present at this interesting and glorious scene. Former military spectacles, when the sovereign reviewed his troops, had excited interest and curiosity, but on this occasion a deeper and more engrossing excitement was visible amongst the countless throng. The ties which bound the hearts of the subjects to their king had been drawn closer by the common danger which threatened both. It was observed that the king received the salutations from the people with an ardour and earnestness that was unusual, and that he returned them with equal warmth. By these interchanges of cordiality the people gave a strong and solemn assurance to stand or fall by their king; and received in return from that king an assurance equally solemn and strong to stand or fall by his people. We doubt whether any public demonstration recorded in history, conveys a grander or more touching impression to our minds than the simple events of this day.

Common danger had produced a common feeling, and come what may, the monarch felt, although his throne might totter, he would still reign in the hearts of his people. That people were then before him ready, he must have felt, to shed their last drop of blood in his defence. Former shortcomings, previous disappointments were forgotten, old heart-burnings were extinguished—and great the loyalty must have been that could so readily have forgiven, and perhaps forgotten all those short-comings and heart-burnings, by which the grandest jewel of the crown had been recklessly torn from it, and another of almost equal worth all but lost too—a free people, headed by a free monarch, the noblest sight God ever permitted His sun to shine upon, were here face to face to-day.

The volunteers evinced their zeal by keeping their enthusiasm in subjection to their duty, and were on the ground (Hyde Park) before the time appointed. As early as seven, several of the corps had entered the Park by Hyde Park Corner and Gros-

venor Gates. At eight the full number had assembled, every one of the different gates was attended by a quarter-master and camp colour man, from each of the corps, and who conducted his regiment to its own ground. Each regiment in proceeding to its respective station marched with its right in front, so that on its arrival at the proper point, the right division stood on the ground it was to occupy in the line, and the other divisions were in close column behind it. Thus the whole corps could deploy into line as soon as the signal was given, without the slightest confusion. At nine, or a little after, the signal gun was fired, and the general line was formed by deploying to the left. The ranks were then extended, and the officers advanced to the front. The deploying in line, and the forming into close ranks, and the subsequent opening of the ranks, were executed with great regularity and order.

The Earl of Harrington, who commanded the line, and the other General officers, were on the ground by eight. About 9,

the Commander in Chief (the Duke of York,) entered from Hyde Park Corner, with the Duke of Cambridge and their staff. Shortly afterwards, the Duke Cumberland, in the uniform of his Regiment, (the Light Dragoons,) entered. Before ten, a signal gun announced the arrival of the King, who was attended by the Duke of Kent in his General's uniform, and the Duke of Clarence, (afterwards William the Fourth,) in that of the Teddington Association.* The king came in his private carriage, but on entering the Park mounted his charger. Preceded by the Life Guards, and the royal grooms with four led horses, elegantly caparisoned, the King rode forward. His Majesty was attended by the princes, his sons, his consort, (Queen Charlotte,) and the Princesses Augusta and Elizabeth, in an open landau, and

* Teddington is a small village on the Thames, well known to anglers, and Bushy Park where the Duke resided, is in its immediate neighbourhood. The fact of a king's son, (afterwards himself a king,) heading a village association needs no comment.

afterwards the Princesses Sophia and Mary followed. Opposite the entrance to Kensington Gardens, the King was met by the Duke of York, and the whole of his brilliant staff. As the procession advanced, it was joined by the exiled French Princes, who were then receiving the hospitality of this nation, accompanied by many of the French noblesse, resplendent with their orders and military insignia. The Royal cavalcade then passed rapidly along the carriage road from Kensington gate to Knightsbridge barracks, where it turned, and crossed to the right of the line by the Serpentine. As soon as the King entered the Park, a royal salute of twenty-one guns was fired by the Artillery company. Another signal gun announced his Majesty's arrival in the centre of the line. The officers then saluted, the corps presented arms, and the bands simultaneously burst forth with "God save the King"—after the corps had shouldered and presented arms, the King passed from the right of the line to the left—each corps carrying arms—the

music playing martial airs during the manoeuvres. As everything was to be thoroughly English on that day, one of our national characteristics, the fog, was present at the festival, and in some degree dimmed the splendour of the early part of the day. It afterwards cleared off, and revealed a sight both grand and exciting, as the King descended the hill to repass at the end of the Serpentine, to the corps on the left of the line, which were stationed on the footway to Kensington Gardens, their faces towards the water; an immense crowd followed the royal procession; the whole of the ground was covered to the summit of the hill with elegantly dressed females, interspersed with volunteers, and officers in their uniform. No carriage or horses were admitted within the lines; nearly all the ladies wore white dresses. Most of the men were in scarlet, except a few naval officers, sharp-shooters and volunteer cavalry, who were in blue. The whole scene now became grand and impressive in the extreme. Having passed the

centre of the line, the King returns to the Serpentine, and takes his position in the centre. A seventh gun gives the signal, and three volleys were fired by battalions from the centre to the flanks; another signal gun was followed by three hearty, universal and unanimous cheers—thousands and tens of thousands of hats and hands were waving in the air—drums beating, and all the bands playing in harmony the National Anthem. A ninth gun is fired, and the whole corps wheeled backwards to their left, by divisions past the King, in the order prescribed, and at twenty minutes past one the pageant is over, and the troops proceed to their respective quarters; the King, accompanied by the royal party, and the foreign princes, return to Buckingham house, followed all the way by an immense crowd.

No longer restrained by the military, the enthusiasm of the people escaped beyond all bounds; they pressed on all sides round their Sovereign to catch a glimpse of his countenance, which beamed with emotion

and satisfaction, and the air resounded with their shouts.

As if this was to be a general jubilee, unchequered with the slightest drawback, the whole affair passed off without a single accident.

On the return of the corps from the review all the windows of the houses by which they passed were crowded with ladies.

The whole number of spectators and men in arms were calculated at 200,000 (the very number which Bonaparte had, in his retirement at St. Helena, proposed visiting us). Many persons came upwards of a hundred miles to be present at this national demonstration. The railing of the Park, to the very top bars; the trees, to their highest branches; the house-tops, and wherever else a human being could perch himself, was surmounted by adventurous spectators. "It was altogether a day on which we have to congratulate London and the empire at large; it was a day which afforded the most glorious sight we ever witnessed, without a

single circumstance to excite the smallest regret.”*

It may interest many localities at the present time to give the names and numbers of the different corps that were reviewed this day :

The Loyal London Volunteer Cavalry	217
Honorable Artillery Company . . .	994
1st Regiment of Royal East India Vo-	
lunteers	640
2nd ditto	636
1st Regiment of Loyal London Volun-	
teers	737
2nd ditto	637
3rd ditto	804
4th ditto	790
5th ditto	801
6th ditto	647
7th ditto	414
8th ditto	777
9th ditto	651
10th ditto	587
11th ditto	293
1st Regiment of Tower Hamlets .	350
Whitechapel	445

* Annual Register for 1895 (p. 450), and which has furnished us with the principal details.

Mile End	383
St. George's-in-the-East	280
Radcliffe	183
Shoreditch	294
Bromley St Leonard	175
Bethnal Green	168
St. Catherine	121
Christ Church Volunteers	181

On the 4th December in that year, "the Royal Spelthorne Legion," commanded by the Duke of Clarence and the Prince of Wales, had its colours presented to it by the latter; thus two future Kings of England contributed to the honour of a corps the name of which we have failed to identify with any locality. The following is the address of the Prince—the English of which is perhaps better in its spirit than in its language :

"VOLUNTEERS !

"It is with the highest satisfaction I take upon myself the honourable office of presenting the Royal Spelthorne Legion with their colours. When I view so respectable a corps, and consider the high character

attached to it, it would be superfluous in me to point out those duties and obligations which have been so fully exemplified in its conduct. When you behold these colours, (taking them in his hand), they will remind you of the common cause to which you are encouraged, for your king, your country, your religion, your laws, liberty, and property, your children and your wives; nay, in short, for everything dear to Englishmen. Accept, then, this pledge, this sacred pledge, which you will take care to defend with your last drop of blood, and only resign with your lives."

A still more interesting, and much more splendid presentation took place on the following month, (January, 1804), at Ranelagh, when "the Queen's Royal Volunteers" received their colours from the Countess of Harrington, who acted as the Queen's representative on this occasion, and made the customary address.

The regiment having mustered in Hyde Park, where they exhibited a very striking

military appearance, their accoutrements being in excellent order, and their horses in high condition, proceeded to take possession of the station appointed them at Ranelagh.

At a quarter past two the party from the Court arrived in three of the Royal carriages. The first contained three of the Queen's Maids of Honour; the second the Vice-Chamberlain and Mr. Vernon; and the third the Countess of Harrington and her daughter, Lady Anne Maria Stanhope, Lady Cardigan, and Lady Aylesbury, two ladies of the Queen's bed-chamber. The commanding officer having handed the Countess and her attendants from the carriage, she was conducted to her box by the Vice-Chamberlain, and followed by her attendants with the same etiquette, as her Majesty would have received. Clio, the muse of history, knowing the weakness of her sex in that particular, has condescended to record the dress the Countess wore. "Her ladyship was dressed in a black *pelice* and a scarlet sash; her head-dress was a rich velvet hat, highly decorated,

and with four very elegant coquelicot feathers. Lady Anna Maria Stanhope appeared in a dress of white satin, ornamented with pearls." We can well understand that Ranelagh had seldom exhibited so distinguished a display of beauty, elegance, and fashion. The two regiments, under the command of Lord Hobart, presented arms; the band playing. They then shouldered arms, and the two pairs of colours were introduced. One (the King's) was a plain Union Standard; but the other, (the county or regimental colour), designed and executed by the Royal Princesses, was a superb piece of needle-work. The ground was a rich purple silk, and Her Majesty's arms were embroidered in the centre, surrounded with sprigs and designs. Prayers were then read, after which the Duke of York's band went to assist at the orchestra. Here the Coronation Anthem was sung, by Incledon, (the Sims Reeves of the day), assisted by Sale, a full chorus, and the boys from Westminster Abbey. The colours were then taken

from Lady Harrington's box to the pulpit, and an animated and appropriate discourse was preached by the Rev. Mr. Moore, from Nehemiah iv. 9. "Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night." It is one of the many remarkable features of this very remarkable time, that a strong religious feeling seemed to mingle with those most joyous demonstrations. Perhaps the most spirit-stirring appeals that were made in those spirit-stirring days, when no man's blood seemed to stagnate, was from the pulpit. Churchman and Non-Conformist, Protestant or Catholic, all roused up the spirits of their congregations to the same glowing pitch of patriotic intensity that evidently animated themselves.

By some inadvertence the signal was neglected to be given, on which the consecration prayer was to have been read, and thus the most touching part of the ceremony was consequently omitted, and the colours, which were by the side of the clergyman, were

taken back to their former station. The officers from each battalion who were to receive them, had ranged themselves before Lady Harrington. The Chamberlain handed them to the Colonel of the regiment, who, kneeling, held them by a piece of purple ribband, and tied them together by pairs.

The Countess of Harrington then, as the Queen's representative, delivered the following address:

"GENTLEMEN,

"Her Majesty having been graciously pleased to confer upon me the honour of presenting to you these colours, I am anxious to express how I am flattered by this distinguished mark of the Queen's favour. At a time, of all others, the most awful, when our country is threatened with the unprovoked attack of a most implacable enemy, and when you have evinced your readiness to stand forward in defence of everything that is most dear to us all; what can be more gratifying or more honourable to you than being peculiarly distinguished by Her

Majesty and receiving your colours from her? Animated as your hearts must be with gratitude to the Queen, in addition to every other noble sentiment that has guided you from the moment of the first offer of your service, it would not only be superfluous but presumptuous in me to add anything upon the occasion, than the expression of every fervent wish for your success, in the event of the enemy carrying his threats into execution; confident that no power, however strenuously exerted, will ever wrest those colours from you while there is a man in your *corps* to defend them."

This vice-royal address was replied to by Lord Hobart, the commander of the corps, who expressed a hope that, should the hour of danger ever arrive, those colours might prove a shield to guard and defend the sacred person of their beloved Sovereign. The ribband was then untied, and the Countess permitted the colours to descend to the expectant ensigns, who were on their knees to receive them. They then rose and

presented them to their regiments, who received them with presented arms. The band then played "God save the King," which was then taken up by the leading singers, with the full chorus.

The immense concourse of spectators prevented the regiments passing before the Countess, but a royal salute was given, and she and her fair attendants quitted the ground, with the same ceremony as they entered. The principal noblemen and authorities in attendance afterwards dined with the officers at the British Coffee House, and a number of loyal and patriotic toasts were given and received with enthusiasm.

A still more interesting ceremony graced the presentation of the colours to "the Loyal London Volunteers," at Blackheath, on the 18th of May following, and which had the additional attraction of a water pageant. The troops, having embarked in boats at the stations allotted to them, proceeded to the place of rendezvous off the Tower. Here they were met by the Earl of Harrington and

his family, and were shortly afterwards joined by the Duke of York. This addition having with several other persons of distinction embarked in the Lord Mayor's and Lord Nelson's barges, a flotilla was formed, which was followed by some hundreds of boats gaily decorated. The shores on each side of the river and the tops of the houses were covered with spectators all the way that the flotilla passed. The vessels in the river hoisted all their colours, and vied with each other in the profusion and variety of their decorations. As the flotilla passed the West India Dock, the volunteers of that corps fired a salute of three vollies with great precision. A similar honour was paid by the Tower Hamlets Militia, at Deptford. The bands of the different regiments and of the River Fencibles played all the way, and greatly contributed to the enlivening effect. The company disembarked at Greenwich, where they were hospitably received at the Governor's house until it was time to proceed to the heath. The Greenwich Pen-

sioners, in their holiday clothes, lined the different avenues of the Hospital. On the left of the landing place a park of artillery gave its repeated discharges, and the corps belonging to the neighbourhood lined the shore from right to left, and presented arms to each regiment as it passed.

On reaching the bottom of Greenwich hill the whole of the different bodies formed into a kind of close column, and thus proceeded to Blackheath. The Committee led the way, preceded by a band, with the ten pair of colours to be presented, and standards for the cavalry. On the arrival at the summit of the hill they drew up, and the regiments passed them according to seniority of number, headed by the Duke of York attended by his staff, and took up their ground, which extended for two miles. The different regiments having formed, the Lord Mayor and the members of the Corporation were sent for, and his Lordship proceeded to the centre of the troops; a signal gun was fired, the officers saluted and the whole line presented

arms. Another gun having signalled, a standard guard from the London Volunteer Company, the grenadiers, consisting of eleven companies, accompanied by the ensigns who were to receive the colours, and preceded by their bands, advanced to a position in the centre. Here the grenadiers formed a circle around the Duke of York and the Lord Mayor, the Princess Charlotte of Wales and from six to seven hundred persons, who were there to grace the imposing spectacle. The colours, being now unfurled, were consecrated in the most solemn manner by the chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Perring, and the ensigns who were there to receive them advanced before the Lord Mayor, who made a speech equally creditable to his feelings and the great city of which he was the chief magistrate. "It was reserved," (he said) "for the present age to prove the falsehood of the imputation that the genius of commerce had subdued the fire of freedom in our hearts; and to evince that those who by civilization and

industry best learn to acquire wealth, by their intrepidity and exertions best know how to preserve it." After other appropriate remarks, the ensigns knelt down and received the colours of their respective regiments. Colonel Birch, as the superior colonel, then replied "in a very elegant and excellent speech," which will be found at length in the "Appendix" of the Annual Register for that year.

After another animated address from Colonel Anderton, the ensigns placed themselves with their colours in front of their respective companies, who faced to the right-about, and marched to their regiments. This seems to have been the culminating point; in every direction were to be seen standards, supported by grenadier companies. As the colours were paraded in front of each regiment, and the word being given to form battalions, each commanding officer addressed his regiment. Three cheers were then given by the whole body, and another signal-gun being fired, the corps were thrown

into line and fired three vollies of battalions from right to left in excellent style. On another signal, the whole line wheeled backward by companies ; and then upon another, stepped off altogether and passed the royal party in review order. The Princess Charlotte (being in a close carriage) received from each company a royal salute, by the colours being waved on the ground as they passed her Royal Highness, " which compliment she returned with a wave of her hand from her bosom in a very attractive manner."* The Duke of York also received a royal salute. The London regiment, and the Royal Artillery Company with their field-pieces, and the City of London and Westminster Light-horse Volunteers, with their dismounted cavalry and flying cars, also passed the royal party. The grounds were kept in an admirable manner by different volunteer corps and the Artillery Company. Some of the regiments marched back

* Appendix to the Chronicle of the Annual Register for 1804, p. 540.

to town, and others proceeded as they came, by water. The boys of the Marine Society's ship were distributed in the rigging, and as the Duke of York and the different regiments passed on their way homeward, cheered vociferously.

The business of the day was as usual concluded by the solemnity of a grand dinner, which was given in the evening by the Lord Mayor to the Duke and the Commandants of the volunteer regiments. We are told, by the trust-worthy authority we have quoted, that his Royal Highness remained at the Mansion House until half past twelve o'clock at night, "delighted with the spectacle of the day as well as by the attentions of the chief magistrate."

In October, 1801, a circular letter was sent by the King's command to all the Lord Lieutenants in the kingdom expressing his Majesty's "deep and lasting sense of their steady attachment to our established constitution, and that loyalty, spirit and perseverance, which have been manifested by the several

corps of yeomanry and volunteers in every part of the country." The Lord Lieutenants were further commanded "in his Majesty's name to thank them, and request that they will continue themselves in readiness for immediate service, unless the definitive treaty is signed, as until then it is necessary that there should be no relaxation in the preparations which have been ready for the general defence."*

It does not seem to us that any apology is due in giving these details; they vividly call back the spirit of the time, and show the efficiency of the Volunteers, and the respect they were held in by all classes, from the Sovereign on the throne to the humblest pedestrian.

It was very well for "the regulars" to smile compassionately at cockney† citizens

* Annual Register (1801), Chronicle, p. 36.

† It would seem that there is something exceedingly droll in the idea of a cockney being a good shot. In the debates of the House of Commons, of the 18th of February of this year, Sir Robert Peel said, as an uncommonly good joke, and judging from the usual

being led by pastry-cooks ; but we have seen what stuff the men were made of ; and we believe that “ every man ” *would* “ have done his duty ” had the threatened danger really happened. Upwards of a quarter of a million of our population stood voluntarily forward in the defence of their country, and principally at their own expense. Surely this may be called “ the cheap defence of nations.” We have seen that their Sovereign placed himself at their head, not from a theatrical love of display, but from feeling, that

quality of *his* witticisms, it is uncommonly good—for him—referring to some of the riflemen having attained great proficiency in shooting—“ At Hythe the first prize was carried off by a genuine cockney (*a laugh*). ” Funny as the idea may be, we can only say we are very glad to hear of the fact that London is likely to be so well defended.

Our landed aristocracy, whose time is spent in firing at partridges for one half of the year, and in the other in firing off platitudes in the House of Commons, are reluctant to believe that men, who can do something besides, may yet be as good shots as those who make shooting the principal business of their lives.

as his subjects came forward to protect his throne, they could not be led more fitly than by himself. We have seen four Princes and a Princess of the blood royal, each in his or her turn, as Providence might select, to become the heir-presumptive of the throne—the Prince of Wales, afterwards George the Fourth, his daughter the Princess Charlotte, the Duke of York, and the Duke of Clarence, afterwards William the Fourth—all giving their personal sanction to these patriotic demonstrations.

None of these persons thought it beneath their illustrious birth to give their countenance and aid to voluntary associations of the people, and that too at a time when social distinctions and the privileges of class were never more generally or jealously regarded. We will not draw parallels between “the Volunteer corps” of 1804 and “the Rifle corps” of 1860, but let us hope that as one has had its honours and rewards in the past, so the other will have them in the future !

CHAPTER X.

Rise and Progress of Steam as a power of War—Allusion to it by Earl Stanhope in 1803—Fulton's proposal to Napoleon—Alison's remarks on it—Invention of "the Screw" propellor—Its superiority over the Paddle for maritime warfare—Ingratitude to Smith the inventor—Importance of Steam in the security of the country—Prince de Joinville's opinion—Thiers—Lamarche—Daru—The Duke of Wellington on our "Defences"—Admiral Bowles—The Earl of Ellesmere—Sir Francis B. Head—"An Officer of experience"—Admiral Sir C. Napier—Sir Howard Douglas—The Quarterly Review—The Edinburgh Review—Present strength of the English Navy.

THE first allusion to steam as a power of war, we meet with in the debates of the House of Lords, on the 16th of May, 1803, when Earl Stanhope, on the message being presented from the King, that he had recalled

his ambassador (Lord Whitworth) from Paris, mentioned a plan that he had heard was presented to the French government by an American gentleman (no doubt Mr. Fulton), by which the navy of England might be completely destroyed, and the channel of the Thames stopped up.

The allusion of Lord Stanhope refers most probably to a generally received opinion in France, that had the naval officers whom Napoleon consulted on Fulton's proposal for the navigation of vessels by steam, given a different judgment, and his invention had been adopted at Boulogne, the invasion would have been carried. In reference to this, Sir Archibald Alison writes, "There appears to be no solid ground for this opinion. Great discoveries, destined like that of gunpowder, printing, and steam, in the end to change the face of the world, never come to maturity but by slow degrees. The sublimest genius, the most overwhelming power, is not able so far to outstrip the march of time, and to give one generation the general use of a discovery

destined by nature for another. Even if it were otherwise, and steam navigation could in a few years have been brought to perfection, or at least into common application, in the French navy, unquestionably the English would not have been idle; the mighty engine would have yielded its powers in a corresponding degree to both sides, and their relative situations would have remained as before.”*

The functions of a poet and a prophet are said to be identical, when exercised with their highest attributes; but our best historians often make the worst prophets. Within a year from the time when Fulton failed in convincing Napoleon’s Admirals of the practicability of steam, in aiding the passage of the flotilla across the Channel, a steam-boat from New York took her first trip on the sea. It also appears that Fulton, after leaving France visited England, and was allowed by our engineer Symington, who had already constructed some vessels to be worked by

* Alison’s Hist. Europe, vol. ix. p. 98.

steam, to inspect them. He subsequently returned to America, and in 1807, completed "the Clermont," a vessel with paddle wheels, moved by a steam engine, which had been executed by our own Bolton and Watt, and was the first which was employed as a passage boat; its first voyage having been made on the Hudson, from New York to Albany.

In 1813, the first steam boat plied on the Thames; it was brought from the Clyde; and from the year 1815, steam boats have constantly been employed for the conveyance of passengers up and down the river.*

Mr. Stevens of New York, took the first steam boat (already referred to) to sea in the year 1804; and the vessel is said to have been moved by a machine resembling a smoke-jack, and may consequently be considered as one of the earliest applications of "the Screw Propeller" in navigation.

The first ship propelled by steam across

* Sir H. Douglas, "*Naval Warfare with Steam*," p. 23.

the Atlantic was "the Savannah," a vessel of 350 tons burden, built at Newport, and in 1819 proceeded to Liverpool, thence to St. Petersburg, and subsequently re-crossed the Atlantic, having used steam during the whole voyage.

In the same year, Lord Melville introduced steam into the English Navy, by "the Regent" being successfully tried as a tug. A larger vessel, "the Comet" of eighty-horse power, was built accordingly, and ready for sea in 1822.

During the years 1842 and 1845, her Majesty's Steam-boat the *Driver* commanded by Captains Harmer and Hayes, made the circuit of the earth.*

But perhaps the greatest of all inventions in respect to the application of steam to war-like purposes, was the invention of "the Screw," as a propelling power, which machinery successfully superseded (or rather proved a most prodigious auxiliary to) the

* Sir Howard Douglas, *Naval Warfare with Steam.*

old paddle wheels. The patent for this truly national undertaking, was taken out in the year 1836, by Messrs Smith and Erichsen, from whence may be dated the rise and progress of screw propulsion.*

As early as 1785, Mr. Bramah obtained a patent for a submerged propeller on the principle of a windmill-sail; subsequent patents were afterwards taken out by other inventors, for propellers on similar principles.

In 1836, Captain Erichsen, a native of Sweden, having as we have already seen obtained, in conjunction with Mr. Smith, a patent in England for a screw propeller, constructed a steam boat with the screw at the stern, which was tried on the Thames in presence of the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the Surveyor General of the Navy. The success was found to be complete, and that we presume in itself, was

* See Creasy, "*Invasions of England*," for a rapid sketch of the progress of Steam as applied to naval purposes, and Fincham, "*Naval Architecture*," and Sir Howard Douglas *supra*.

considered a sufficient reason by the Admiralty why it should *not* obtain the approval of the English Government. There was, however, a Yankee at this time in London, who had his eyes open, Captain Stockton, of the United States Navy, and he strongly recommended it to his government, who at once saw the importance of the invention. Under his direction an iron vessel with a screw-propeller was constructed in England; and after crossing the Atlantic, it was employed on the Delaware and Rariton Canal; thus affording complete evidence of the success of the screw, as a means of propulsion both for inland waters, and for the high seas.*

In respect to the superiority of the Screw over the ordinary paddles for maritime warfare; they are thus summed up by a distinguished authority. "Whatever the comparative advantages or disadvantages of the paddle and screw, applied to the propulsions of ships of war, may be, the screw possesses so many advantages over the paddle as to

* Sir H. Douglas, pp. 24, 25.

give it a decided preference for general purposes.

“The screw admits of a better, stronger, and more simple form of vessel. Relieved of the paddle boxes, the screw-propelled vessel is far less acted upon by head winds, and less subject to the heavy rolling motion occasioned and aggravated by the oscillations consequent on the top weights on both sides of a paddle-wheel vessel, when the boxes receive the impulses and surges of the sea, such oscillations being highly unfavourable to gunnery. The screw is little affected by alterations in the trim of the ship, it is very nearly equally effective in all depths of immersion, and if entirely submerged, it may be driven by the direct action of engines placed so low in the vessel, that both the moving power and the propelling machinery are safe from the damaging effects of shot ; the screw allows more freely the use of sails, and consequently enables the vessel to which it is applied, to retain her faculties as a sailing ship, in a much higher degree than pad-

dle wheels; it admits of considerable reduction in the beam or breadth of the vessel, which, besides other advantages, is an important consideration in the economy of space in a basin or in dock, and in respect to the magnitude of the flood-gates through which it has to pass. To which advantages may be added, that the decks of screw-propelled vessels are wholly available for broad-side armaments, and admit of full gunnery power being retained.”*

It is saddening to reflect that Smith, to whose genius “the Screw Propeller” is indebted for its practicability as a motive power, and to whom England is indebted for exchanging her “wooden walls,” for impregnable and moveable iron ones, and to whom we *may* owe, at no distant day, the maintenance of our supremacy of the seas, reaped little benefit from his splendid improvement in steam navigation. He is at the present time living in complete retirement from public life; and we may add from public

* Sir H. Douglas, “Naval Warfare,” pp. 56-7.

utility, in Guernsey; the only reward that has been conferred upon him for one of the most successful applications of scientific principles to purposes of warfare is a small pension, conferred (we believe) by the private bounty of his Sovereign.

There is another priceless advantage obtained by steam over sailing power, in following up a victory already obtained.

“On land, an enemy in retreat takes advantage of the inequalities of the ground, profits by the concealment which woods and other impediments to pursuit afford, and avails himself of the natural defences which are to be found in all countries; a limit is also assigned to the intensity of pursuit by the exhaustion of physical energies of men and horses, who have borne the heat and burden of the day. But the sphere of naval operations is an expanse of water, open to view, except when ships are enveloped in smoke; the manner and direction in which a discomfited fleet retires are seen, and the damage sustained is obvious. The seaman, his exer-

tions in battle over, finds rest in his turn, and is restored to strength by an immediate supply of food, whilst his ship carries him forward to reap the fruits of the victory gained. It follows that the Admiral of a steam fleet, who has succeeded in throwing an enemy's fleet into confusion, or in gaining a victory in the tactical signification of the term, will only have accomplished half his duty, if he do not follow up his successes vigorously; any advantage gained by a steam-fleet in action, should always be attended with great results."*

Having thus given a brief and rapid survey of the rise and progress of steam navigation, and its adaptation to maritime warfare, we have now to consider its probable effect on the security of this country. The importance of it is as evident as it is undeniable—not only as facilitating the attack of a foreign foe, but as affording us the means of meeting him on equal terms. The sea, encircled as it were by her "wooden walls,"

* Sir H. Douglas, "Naval Warfare," p. 133.

has hitherto been England's firm and unchanging protector. But with the help of steam, an enemy is no longer at the mercy of atmospheric, or tidal influences, his squadrons will be nearly independent of both wind and weather.

One who has studied the subject from the point of view which most interests us, says, "With the aid of Steam Navigation, a war of most daring aggression is permitted at sea. We are certain of our movements, and free in our actions. Time, wind, and waves need no longer give us uneasiness, we can calculate to the day and hour."*

"We shall make war with safety, because we shall attack two vulnerable things—the confidence of the English people in their insular position, and her maritime resources.

"Our steam service would have two distinct scenes of action ; first, the Channel, in which our ports could shelter a considerable force, which, going forth by night, could defy the

* Prince de Joinville on the "State of the Naval strength of France," p. 12.

most numerous and dense fleet of cruisers. Nothing could prevent this force from meeting before morning at any part of the French coast agreed upon, when it might act with impunity.”*

The great modern historian of France, thus modestly expresses his opinion.

“It is not possible, even now to predict what part steam navigation will play in future warfare. That it will add to the strength of France against England is very probable. Whether it will or not render the straits more easy to be crossed, will solely depend upon the efforts which France shall see fit to make for securing a superiority in the employment of this wholly new power; that will depend upon her patriotism and her foresight.”†

Another French writer says—“Steam has thrown hundreds of bridges across the Channel; we can now pass at any time, and in any weather, from France to England.

“In estimating at 85,000 men the number

* Ibid.

† Thiers' History of the Consulate and Empire.

of troops that England could raise for the defence of her territory, we certainly concede more than the reality. The mass of the people would be of no use to the Government. They are absolutely unacquainted with the use of arms." [Since that time, however, they have learned to handle the rifle.]

"A landing may be effected upon a hundred different points of the English coast, and then a skilful general will not hesitate what course to adopt; he will choose in his rear a point of concentration to re-unite his troops, cover London, or march in force against the enemy. * * *

"France has at this moment 1432 naval officers and 200 students of the first class, who may be ranked as the staff. If you question them on the possibility of a descent upon England in the present state of naval science, I may be allowed to say every voice would answer in the affirmative."*

* M. Hyppolyte Lamarche, Letter to M. Thiers and M. Barrot.

All we can say to this unanimous opinion is — *nous verrons*.

It would appear, however, that the French, while they are equally sanguine on the practicability of so great an enterprise, do not think so large a force is necessary to render it successful. Upon this let us hear one of themselves: M. Daru, who, in a speech delivered at a sitting of the Commission of Inquiry, on the 27th January, 1851, after observing that, on the expedition to Rome, the whole French army was embarked and conveyed in ten days from Toulon to Civita Vecchia, infers that 24 steam frigates, 24 transports, 2 corvettes, and 3 avises, concentrated at Dunkirk, Cherbourg, or Brest, would suffice to disembark 30,000 men and 6000 horses in any part of Great Britain or Ireland.”*

Having thus, *ab hoste doceri*, taken a few hints from our neighbours, and possible foes, we will see what our friends think of our situation. And first we have the GREAT

* Enquête Parlementaire, tom. i. p. 140.

DUKE, who, in his memorable letter to Sir John Burgoyne, K.C.B., and dated January 9th, 1847, gives us this solemn, and perhaps we might say, prophetic warning.

After alluding to the possibility of a war with France, he says, " You are aware that I have been for many years sensible of the alterations produced in maritime warfare and operation by the application of steam to the propelling of ships at sea. This discovery immediately exposed all parts of the coasts of these islands, which a vessel could approach at all times of the tide, and in all seasons, by vessels so propelled, from all quarters. We are, in fact, assailable, and at least liable to insult, and to have contributions levied upon us on all parts of our coast ; that is, the coast of these, including the Channel, Islands, which to this time, from the period of the Norman conquest, have never been successfully invaded.

" I have endeavoured in vain to awaken the attention of different Administrations to

this state of things, as well known to our neighbours (rivals in power, at least former adversaries and enemies) as it is to ourselves."

He then emphatically says, "We have no defence, or hope of defence, excepting in our fleet."

"We hear a great deal of the spirit of the people of England, for which no man entertains a higher respect than I do. But unorganized, undisciplined, without systematic subordination, established and well understood, this spirit, opposed to the fire of musketry and cannon, and to sabres and bayonets of disciplined troops, would only expose those animated by such a spirit to confusion and destruction."

He then advises garrisons of 10,000 men, at the moment war is declared, at each of the following places — "Channel Islands (besides their local militia), Plymouth, Cork, Portsmouth, Dover; and for Sheerness, Chatham, and the Thames. Milford Haven

he puts down for 5000 only ; but for reasons we have already given, that station well demands the maximum number.

He then states the constitutional measures that he has entreated the different administrations to decide—to raise, embody, and discipline the militia to the number it was during the late war, which would give 150,000 men, which, with an augmentation of the regular army, “ would put the country on its legs in respect to national force, and I would engage for its defence, old as I am.”

“ But as we stand now, and if it be true that the exertions of the fleet are not sufficient to provide for our defence, we are not safe for a week after the declaration of war.”

“ I am accustomed to the consideration of these questions, and have examined and reconnoitred over and over again the whole coast from the North Foreland, by Dover, Folkestone, Beachy Head, Brighton, Arundel, to Selsey-bill, near Portsmouth, and I say that, excepting immediately under the fire of Dove^r

Castle, there is not a spot on the coast on which infantry might not be thrown on shore, at any time of tide, with any wind, and in any weather, and from which such body of infantry so thrown on shore, would not find within the distance of five miles a road into the interior of the country through the cliffs practicable for the march of a body of troops."

He then shows the most vulnerable parts of our coasts, and says the French army "must be much altered since the time at which I was better acquainted with it, if there are not now belonging to it forty *chefs d'etat*, major-generals, capable of setting down and ordering the march of 40,000 men, their embarkation, with their horses and artillery, at the several French ports on the English coasts; that of the artillery and cavalry in named ports or mouths of rivers; and the assembly at named points of the several columns; and the march of these from stage to stage to London."

"I know of no mode of resistance much

less of protection from the danger, excepting by an army in the field, capable of meeting and contending with its formidable enemy aided by all the means of fortification which experience of war and science can suggest."

After taking a rapid view of our dangers and resources, he concludes with these words of warning and mighty significance:—

"Look at the conditions of the treaties of Paris, 1814, 1815. France, having been in possession of nearly every capital on Europe, and having levied contributions in each, and having had in its possession, or under its influence, the whole of Italy, Germany, and Poland, is reduced to its territorial limits as they stood in 1792. Do we suppose that we should be allowed to keep—could we advance a pretension to keep—more than the islands composing the United Kingdom, ceding dis] gracefully the Channel Islands, on which an invader has never established himself since the period of the Norman Conquest? I am bordering upon seventy-seven years of age, passed in honour. I hope that the Almighty

may protect me from being the witness of the tragedy which I cannot persuade my contemporaries to take measures to avert."

Previously to the memorable letter of the Duke of Wellington, the attention of the country had been drawn to the subject of its critical danger, in 1846, by Admiral Bowles, C.B., who, in his "Essay on Naval Tactics," told us what this new application of a well-known power would do both for and against us, "that we had then arrived at a new era, in which steam would enable naval commanders to conduct their operations and manœuvres on military and scientific principles; that fleets, moving by a force beyond the influence of wind and weather, would have it in their power to attack or repulse an enemy in a manner hitherto unknown in naval actions; that an admiral, by keeping his ships together in a collected and manageable order and skilfully manœuvred, could prevent the recurrence of the many indecisive and unsuccessful naval engagements of time past; and he concludes that very able tract

by observing that, as in an army so in a fleet, the force would be handled in such way, as to bring the fleet into action, so as to enable it to exert its power with the most decisive advantage.”* To this high authority may be added that of Captain Dalhgren, U. S. Navy, who observes that the principles of military tactics will hereafter enter largely into the manœuvres of fleets.†

In 1848 the Earl of Ellesmere, in a letter to the Editor of “The Times,” says, “I do not believe it would be impossible, in our present state of preparation, for a French Minister of War, favoured by circumstances, to land on British ground a force sufficient in number, discipline, and equipment to march in any direction along the turnpike-roads of England.

“That direction might depend on the place of landing—it might be Portsmouth, it might

* Admiral Bowles, C.B. “Essay on Naval Tactics,” Ridgway, 1846; quoted in Douglas’s “Naval Warfare,” p. 89.

† “Shells and Sea Guns,” p. 394.

be Chatham, it might be the capital. In each, in any case, with our present means of defence I believe resistance would be hopeless, and an attempt at armed opposition only productive of useless bloodshed. To oppose such a handful of regular troops as we could muster, scarcely provided with artillery, and totally destitute of a reserve, to a French army such as under my supposition would be brought against them, would be an act of useless desperation. If the French were to appear at one end of London, the wisest movement the Guards could make would be to march out at the other. For the rest three howitzers would be sufficient, and the Lord Mayor would soon be busy with the details of billets, and whatever contribution might be accepted as a commutation for indiscriminate plunder.”*

Another writer says, “If such a storm were to burst at all, it would arise from political causes subsequently explained, and break upon our heads without any prepara-

* Letter of the Earl of Ellesmere to “The Times.”

tion. Our ambassador would probably just embark at Dover, as the expedition was touching land somewhere else upon our shores.”*

Sir Francis B. Head gives the following deductions from facts he brought forward in his “Defenceless State of Great Britain:”

“1. The desire for revenge of the French army has materially increased, while on the other hand the inclination of the English people to defend themselves from invasion has almost inversely with the increase of their wealth diminished, until it has now become nearly extinct. [Nearly ten years have however passed since these opinions were given; and as times have changed, so we have changed with them.]

“2. While in the French Navy the improvement in the art of gunnery, the establishment of ‘*compagnes permanentes*,’ of practical gunner-seamen; the power of steam to tow vessels and boats of all description across the

* “The National Defences,” by the author of “The Revelations of Russia.”

British Channel during almost any weather by day or by night ; and lastly, the construction of a gigantic impregnable harbour of rendezvous at Cherbourg, capable of containing more than 90 sail of the line, have removed the principal difficulties against which Napoleon had to contend ; the British people have not yet devised any practical plan for manning the ships of war they have built ; and that as the navy of England has colonies and commerce to defend all over the world, and the French navy has no such errant duty, by a sudden secret concentration of the French fleet on Napoleon's old plan, or even by the power of the fleet at that moment in the harbour of Cherbourg, a temporary command of the British Channel could easily be obtained."

[And here we may recall Napoleon's striking words, "If we are masters of the Channel for six hours England has lived her time. Let us but be masters of the straits for six hours, and we are the masters of the world!"]

“3. That while the French army is now nearly as large, more efficient, and better appointed than it was in 1803, and while their ‘*morale*’ or disposition for invasion and plunder is more hostile than it then was, the British people, instead of patriotically congregating for self-defence as they then did—an armed force amounting to 130,000 regular troops, 80,000 armed militia, and 300,000 armed volunteers—have gradually and almost in proportion to the increase of the danger that now awaits them, culpably reduced their army to a mere corps of relief for the remote colonial stations of the empire; and having moreover dismissed their militia, they could now, by abandoning their sovereign, their dockyards, arsenals, &c., to the inefficient forces we have named, scrape together by every possible exertion somewhat less than 45,000 men, to resist at various points the feigned and real invasions of a well-disciplined French army of say 150,000 men, guarded and protected by a fleet from Cherbourg of say 12 sail of the line, 12

frigates, 12 sloops, 12 war steamers, with an adequate further amount of steam power. Under these appalling circumstances and combinations, we submit that there can remain no doubt in the minds of our principal naval and military authorities, especially among those who witnessed the manner in which, in 1801, 6000 British troops, embarking at once from ships many miles from the beach, landed in Egypt, in spite of the French infantry, a numerous artillery, and of cavalry who charged them as they jumped on shore—that there exist no professional reasons for doubting the practicability of a French invading army, of the amount mentioned, in the course of a few days effecting a landing on the coast of England !”

Cherbourg was the first demonstration of modern French power that opened the drowsy eyes of England to a sense of impending danger. “There can be no doubt but what the whole of these immense works are pre-

* Sir F. B. Head, “The Defenceless State of Great Britain,” p. 305. 1850.

pared for a war with *England*, and with *England only*. . . . We ought not to shut our eyes to the fact that such a place is within seven or eight hours' sail of England, and that a French fleet leaving it in the evening with a leading wind, could be off Portsmouth next morning, and could bombard any of our towns on the southern coast. And now one word as to the fleet. I believe I only echo the opinions of all the naval officers present, when I say that France never sent a finer armament on the waters. Every improvement of which ships are capable has been tried with them, and even to such points as new and very excellent 'steps' on the cables has the minutest attention been paid. The officers are all excellent theorists, quick and intelligent men, and full of mathematics; the crews for the most part young, with a want of weight and "beef" about them, but smart, active, and sinewy.*

Admiral Sir Charles Napier, in a letter

* Letter from "An Officer of experience in our service."—*Times*, September 10, 1850.

dated 1st October 1850,* in reference to the naval display of the French at Cherbourg, says, "Napoleon said that Cherbourg was 'an eye to see and a hand to strike an ancient enemy.' We had better take care, or some day it will strike with a vengeance. We have Russia on our left flank with a large fleet in the Baltic; and France, with a harbour capable of holding a large fleet, in our front, waiting only a railroad to make it complete.† Should these powers ever fall out with us, I do not think they will pay much attention to Cobden's Peace Congress. One wants to go to Constantinople, the other to go to the Rhine. We want to prevent both; and when the pear is riper, Cobden's preaching in Frankfort will not prevent them."

Many persons in this country say, "We have always beaten our neighbouring enemy at sea, and therefore always shall." Let those persons read the work of Sir Howard

* Quoted in Head's "Defenceless State of Great Britain."

† It has been since completed.

Douglas and of experienced naval officers on the vast and successful improvements made by the French during the long peace, in every thing connected with marine warfare, and a little of this overweening confidence will be dispelled.*

On the best authorities naval actions will in future be decided, not according to Nelson's bold and simple tactics, but on principles in which the science of gunnery will have a much larger share than seamanship and human courage and muscle.†

To these opinions and warnings we may add that of General Sir Howard Douglas, whose great practical experience and high scientific attainments deserve a most attentive consideration. "My object is to impress upon the country the fact that the defenceless state of England is a matter of *continued contemplation openly and publicly discussed*, not only in France but elsewhere—that the

* Letter in the *Times*, 3rd January, 1852, on "The Invasion of England."

† Ibid.

invasion of England is the theme of European disquisition, *even* to the very details of execution.”*

“It must be observed, however, that alterations in tactics have always been made by slow degrees, and have generally followed at long intervals the improvements which rendered them necessary. At the present time it may be said that no efficient change has yet been made in military tactics to meet the introduction of the improved rifle, as a general arm for the infantry of the line. The employment of steam as a motive power in the warlike navies of all maritime nations, is a vast and sudden change in the means of engaging in action on the seas, which must produce an entire revolution in naval warfare, and must render necessary the immediate adoption of new measures in tactics, and new material resources; these should be forthwith studied and provided, with all the mental and physical energies which the

* Sir Howard Douglas, “Treatise on Naval Gunnery,” 1858.

talent and wealth of this country can exert ; in particular, no money should be spared, considering the magnitude of the object at stake—no less than the preservation of our naval supremacy—in procuring all that is necessary to meet the requirements in the service at this momentous epoch.”*

After speaking of the great improvements in all European nations, in naval constructions and armaments, and particularly the introduction of steam since the wars of the great French Revolution, he concludes : “ In short, the navies of Europe and America have so increased the number and strength of their ships, and their *personnel*, in all that relates to the science and practice of war, that in a future contest the sea will become the theatre of events, more important and decisive than have ever yet been witnessed.”†

A still more recent writer, who, although anonymous, affords us the strongest proof of

* Gen. Sir Howard Douglas “ On Naval Warfare with Steam,” Introduction, p. xii.

† Ibid.

his being perfectly conversant with the subject, gives us the following reasons for judging of the altered character of warfare by the introduction of steam and other scientific inventions.

“No one will deny the enormous increase of power given to war vessels by the introduction of steam propulsion. Not only does it render vessels independent of winds and currents in proceeding to an appointed rendezvous, but it enables them in battle to take and maintain any position that may be assigned to them, and to move with all the regularity and precision of armies on shore.”

“Assuming however that at any given time France were to have 30 or 40 ships of the line in the Channel, when we could only meet her with 20 or 30, we must in all probability be either beaten or forced to retire into our harbours. If in this contingency she were to content herself by blockading our harbours, destroying our mercantile ports, and sweeping away our richly-laden ships as prizes into her harbours, she might

do us infinite damage and bring a frightful extent of misery and ruin upon our population. But the blow would not be fatal. Probably within three months—certainly within six—we should be more than a match for her on the ocean. With our trade destroyed and our mercantile seamen idle, there would be no want of sailors. Every public and private dockyard would be at work night and day; every engineer's shop would be turned into a gun factory; every ferry-boat and river-craft would be strengthened and fitted out with a gun large or small; and in some shape or other we could easily put 10,000 guns on the sea, with 150,000 men to man them, and would again be safe." "If the French can obtain the command of the Channel for three months, or even for three weeks, they can easily land 200,000 or 250,000 men on our shores; and this accomplished there is absolutely nothing to hinder her taking possession of the capital."*

* Quarterly Review, No. 211, p. 260.

Another work, of equal authority, although adopting opposite opinions in politics, comes to the same conclusion.

“The application of steam to navigation has reduced the Channel pretty nearly to what the Rhine or any other broad and deep river used to be fifty years ago. An army determined on crossing will find the opportunity of doing so, in greater or less force, at almost any stage in a war. For blockades with steam fleets are out of the question; and steam-ships move with such certainty, as well as with such speed, that the aggressive power which has made up its mind to sacrifice if need be, one or two vessels of war, will always be in a condition so to occupy the look-out squadron as shall enable its transports to steal down by cover of the night and reach the opposite shores by day-dawn. We say again emphatically, that the chances against any attempt of the kind are, in our opinion, many. But neither the attempt, nor the accomplishment of it, is impossible; and who can consider without

dismay the consequence to our national greatness which would ensue, were a French Marshal, at the head of 50,000 men, to reach London ; or a French General with 20,000 to burn Portsmouth, or Sheerness, or Chatham.”*

It is, therefore, contrasting the present position of the two nations with their respective positions at the time of the great descent contemplated by Napoleon on our shores in 1804-5-6, incontestable, that if we were in danger then, we are in still greater peril now. We have seen in the preceding pages that our force at the former crisis on land, including both regulars and irregulars, exceeded half a million of men, and our fleet was far superior to that opposed to us. At the present time, the military strength of France is even greater than what it was then—and what, we may *ask*—but we dare not answer—is *at present* our own? If we have any advantage over our adversaries it is in our navy, but we have seen what vast strides to-

* Edinburgh Rev. vol. 96, p. 24 (1852).

wards perfection the French have made in their fleet ; we have still, therefore, in order to come up to them, enough on our hands if we would maintain our ancient and well-deserved superiority. While there is everything to animate us and to encourage us, and nothing really to dispirit us, at the same time there is no justification for supineness, or neglect of any precaution for securing the efficiency of our ships, and of the officers and men who are to work them. It would be nothing short of insanity, now we know the character and resources of our foe, if, because we have in all our struggles with her hitherto—extending over five centuries—been generally triumphant, and even when we have not, succeeded in holding our own—if we should now make up our minds comfortably that the same result must again happen ; on the contrary, it may still be the fortune of England “to command success,” but it will be on the inevitable condition that she “deserves it.”

We have already seen what is the present

strength of the French Navy, we have now to add a few statistics as to our own.

From a return just made in the present session of Parliament to the House of Commons, it appears that at the present time we have fit for immediate service the following steam and sailing vessels :—

48 screw ships of the line.

25 frigates (screw).

9 paddle frigates.

9 screw block ships.

16 corvettes (screw).

45 screw and 35 paddle sloops.

169 screw gun vessels and gunboats.

8 screw floating batteries

18 screw transports.

43 paddle transports, troopships, tenders, yachts, &c.

4 screw mortar ships and floats afloat.

Making altogether 345 screw and 111 paddle ships, and giving a total of 456 vessels. There are also 11 ships of the line, 9 frigates, 4 iron cased ships, 5 corvettes, 15 sloops, and 23 gunboats, which are either undergoing the

process of conversion or are being built. Of effective sailing ships of the line we have 15, and 22 frigates, of which 12 and 6 are respectively fit to be converted. In addition to these there are 22 sloops and 84 mortar vessels and floats still propelled by sails; making a grand total of 666 steam and sailing vessels, of which 599 are now afloat.

Should Sir Francis B. Head favour us with a new edition of "*The Defenceless* state of Great Britain," we rely on his candour in adding the above very comforting statement.

CHAPTER XI.

Government measures and Parliamentary proceedings on the formation of the Volunteer Corps, 1798-1804—Agitation of the public mind on the renewal of hostilities in 1803—Debates on the King's Message—Debate on Bill for raising a reserved Force—The celebrated measure for raising a levy *en masse*, and spirited debate—The thanks of the House of Commons voted to the Volunteers—Army estimate for the year 1804—Animated debates—Patriotic spirit evinced on both sides of the House.

WE are now to consider the Government and Parliamentary proceedings, which were adopted, and took place on the formation of the Volunteer Corps in 1798. The following is a condensation of the most important parts of a letter addressed to the Lord Lieutenants of the Counties, for the regulations of the Volunteer Corps.

It directs them immediately to determine on the places of depot to which the live and

dead stock are to be removed ; the manner in which they are to be taken care of at such depots ; the route which they are to take, and those which they are to avoid, in order not to interfere with the movements of the military ; the allotments of yeomanry, or other escorts for their protection, or for enforcing the regulations established respecting them ; the necessary arrangements for removing the infirm persons, women, and children, and next to them such articles of property as are most valuable ; the precautions to be taken for destroying the remainder, and for obtaining by previous estimates agreeable to the provisions of the Act, some grounds by which the amount of compensation to be made to owners of property so destroyed may be ascertained ; the separate place of rendezvous, to which every description of persons, whether connected with the armed force or otherwise, should repair, on the signals of alarm being made ; the arrangement of those signals, &c. No volunteer to be admitted into the armed association, whose

habitual occupation and place of residence is not within the division of the county to which the association may extend. Those who prefer cavalry may be received into the nearest troop, or formed in separate troops, of not less than 40 or more than 80 men. The officers to be recommended by the Lord Lieutenant, and entitled to yeomanry cavalry allowance and assistance. To be trained for six hours, once a week, and in case of invasion, serve within the military district to which they belong.

The armed infantry to consist of companies, from 60 to 120 men, armed as the volunteer corps of towns, or a certain proportion with pikes, with uniform clothing, or a fair allowance for the same, and to be commanded by proper officers, resident and having not less than £50 income in land, within the county, or renting land in the same to the amount of £100. The sons of persons so qualified, or persons having previously held some military commission, rendering them eligible for such a situation,

are exempted from these restrictions. Persons accustomed to military service, on half pay or not, will be preferred and allowed full pay. To be trained six hours once a week, and serve within the limits above. Every man of the volunteer corps, who thinks proper to claim it, will be entitled to 1s. per week, paid by government. A depot for the arms to be provided at a safe place within the county. None but known and respectable housekeepers, or persons who can bring at least two such housekeepers to answer for their good behaviour, will be admitted. Mr. Dundas concludes by strongly recommending to every description of persons to lay aside all untimely and misplaced jealousy respecting the military powers, with which every arrangement must be concerted.*

The agitation of the public mind during the summer of 1803, was excessive. The real situation of the country had been kept back by the ministry, (Mr. Addington's,)

* "Appendix to the Chronicle" of the Annual Register, for 1798.

which betrayed an indecision, and want of firmness, utterly unworthy of the trying period.

We have already seen that on the 6th of May, it was announced in the House of Lords, that His Majesty had given orders to Lord Whitworth, (our ambassador) to leave Paris, if negotiations then pending were not brought to an immediate close; and that General Andreossy, the French ambassador, had also applied for his passport to be ready, to enable him to leave London, at the same time he received information of Lord Whitworth leaving Paris.

On the 16th of May, the message was presented to both Houses of Parliament, from the King, which at once banished every hope of peace, by informing them that his ambassador had been recalled from Paris, and that the French ambassador had left London!

Two days afterwards, motions were made in both Houses respectively for copies of the letters and state papers, forming the corres-

pondence between Great Britain and France subsequent to the peace of Amiens. The debate took place on the 23rd, and the subject was of such extraordinary interest, that there was perhaps never before so much anxiety exhibited by the public to be present at the discussion.* In the House of Commons the galleries were filled at an early hour, and the reporters could not gain admission, and only an imperfect report of the first day's discussion, in consequence, reached the public eye of this most interesting debate.

Lord Pelham opened the debate; he was followed by the Duke of Cumberland "in a very elegant and impressive speech." The Duke of Clarence (afterwards William the Fourth) Lords Mulgrave, Grenville, Melville, King, and Ellenborough; the Dukes of Norfolk and Richmond, and the most distinguished members of the House followed.

A galaxy of talent also gave lustre to the

* Parl. Hist. of England, vol xxxvi.; and see Annual Register (1803), pp. 145-150.

debate in the Lower House ; Mr. (afterwards Lord) Erskine, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Grey, Mr. Mr. Canning, Mr. Fox, Mr. Whitbread, and Mr. Windham were among the speakers. In each House ministers had a triumphant majority.

Early in the following month, (June) the army estimates for the year were brought forward by the Secretary for War (Mr. Yorke), and he directed the attention of the House to the means of defence against the vast preparations of the enemy ; for this purpose he relied not only on the militia, but on the yeomanry and volunteers also, as a subsidiary force, in aid of the regular army.

The 17th of June was rendered prominent, by a message from the King being brought up to the House of Lords, stating that his Majesty had felt compelled to order letters of marque and reprisal to issue against France and its subjects, in consequence of that power having refused to acknowledge the neutrality of the Batavian republic. A similar message was brought to the House

of Commons on the following day (the 18th). On the 20th, a debate on a bill for raising additional forces for the defence of the country, and for defensive operations was brought in, and elicited some energetic addresses from both sides of the House. By it the government proposed to raise forthwith an army of reserve of 50,000; 34,000 of which were for England, 10,000 for Ireland, and 6,000 for Scotland. The men were to be raised by ballot, as the militia and their services were to extend to Great Britain, Ireland, and the Channel Islands.

The motion was opposed by Mr. Windham, and supported by Mr. Pitt and Lord Castlereagh.*

On the 27th, on a motion for the re-committal of the bill, and after a humorous speech by Mr. Sheridan, Colonel Crawford strongly observed on the menacing attitude of the enemy, whose object was decidedly to push up to London, and subdue the empire in the metropolis. Upon this Mr. Mac-

* Vide Parl. Hist. of England, vol. xxxvi. p. 1574.

naghten, with considerable warmth, replied that he could never endure to hear it said, that the conquest of London was the conquest of the empire. He would have both the Hon. gentleman and Bonaparte to know that the people of Great Britain and the people of Ireland would contest every inch of ground with an invader, and would be driven into the sea, before they would yield to the proudest armies of France. He was convinced that an invasion of the country would give the enemy a lesson, which would settle that speculation for ever. "This speech," says the Annual Register for that year, "was received with the most enthusiastic applause."

The bill was at length passed without further opposition, and was considered as the first measure of the Government, calculated to retrieve its former errors and short comings. The passing of the bill was recognised as a proof that the fabric of that gallant and triumphant army, whose prowess and march of victory had during the previous contest

with France swelled the note of England's glory to the highest pitch, and which had resounded from the Capital of the Mysore, to the western limits of Europe, was completely dismantled, and beyond all hope of reparation,* but as the exigency of the nation required some mode of defence, it was allowed to pass without any decided opposition.

The bill had barely become law, before another measure was introduced to amend it, and for authorizing the raising a levy *en masse*, in the event of invasion. The Secretary at War (Mr. Yorke) moved for leave to bring in the bill, on the 18th of July, and produced authorities from the time of the Anglo-Saxons, to prove that this levy was an ancient and indispensable prerogative of the Crown, and that every liege subject was bound at the call of his Sovereign to take up arms, in case of an invasion of the realm. The most insolent of all enemies, who had now subdued the greater part of the continent,

* Annual Register for 1803, p. 191.

threatened us with invasion and slavery ; and there never was a time when it was more necessary to assert that ancient and undoubted prerogative of the Crown. The same principles, that in the reign of Henry VIII. required all persons under the age of sixty years to exercise themselves with shooting with the bow, rendered it necessary that Englishmen of the present day should exercise themselves in the arms then in use. In case of invasion, every man should be bound to march, but the volunteers would only be required in their own corps. After panegyricizing the conduct of the English at Toulon, Acre, Lincelles and Egypt, he said there was no reason to suppose the Englishmen of the present day unequal to those of Cressy and Agincourt.*

Mr. Windham, after making some sharp remarks, on the ministry who had formerly considered it the language of despondency,

* We refer our readers to the *Parl. Hist. of England*, vol. xxxvi. p. 1624, for this remarkable specimen of Parliamentary eloquence at its most remarkable period.

to admit the possibility of invasion, now admitted that possibility. The magnanimity on the part of ministers consisted in telling the people that there was no danger, and therefore they must not be alarmed. He charged the ministry with supineness and negligence, in bringing the country into danger before they had taken precautionary measures for its defence. Our motto should be

*"Omnia precipi, atque animo
Mecum ante peregi."*

But was that the picture of our actual state? He blamed Government for not giving the country notice of its danger, and bringing forward compulsory measures before a trial of its voluntary exertions had been made. After a witty and imaginative speech, he said he should not oppose this, or any other measure for the defence of the country.

Lord Hawkesbury further explained the object of the bill, and said that its operation ceased, as long as a sufficient number of volunteers could be found in any district.

He warmly defended the ministers, denied the existence of the danger ; but if London or even twenty Londons should fall into the hands of the French, yet the country would remain unconquered ; and declared it to be the fixed determination of the Government to defend to the last extremity every acre of English ground.

After Sir Francis Burdett had expressed his views, which were more political than national, Mr. Pitt addressed the House. He thought that to place the country on a footing of perfect security, something similar to the measure was necessary ; he considered it adequate to the danger, strictly constitutional, and agreeable to the ancient prerogative of the Crown. If the British nation were once completely roused, any force that the enemy would send would operate only as a detachment acting against a nation in arms ; and concluded by declaring his confidence that the people of the empire united for defence must be invincible.

Lord Castlereagh defended the ministers

from supineness. Government had availed themselves of as many offers of voluntary service as they could accept without crippling the army of reserve ; and eulogized the volunteers, and especially the Irish ones. The Crown had now the right to call upon every liege subject in case of an invasion, and the object of the bill was to impose a duty on the people to receive previous instruction in the use of arms.

Mr. Fox gave his hearty concurrence and conscientious support to the measure, because it was for the defence of the country more than for any project of offensive war. He relied principally on the armed mass of the people to resist invasion. The mass of a great people instructed in the use of arms was a solid and permanent security, that did not depend upon one battle, nor be rendered inefficacious by any untoward circumstances. The invaders might have regular armies as numerous and as well disciplined as our men, but they could not bring over that which we could command, an armed peasantry. He

expressed his opinion that such an armament might be obtained voluntarily and without any compulsion whatever ; if however compulsion was necessary it should be resorted to.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer enumerated the measures taken since the 8th of March (when the King's message was brought) to shew that ministers had not been tardy in their preparations. First, the militia had been called out ; secondly, the supplement to the militia was ordered to be embodied ; then followed the army of reserve, and after all those additions to the public force, the present measure was brought forward. He considered the measure as singularly adapted to the genius and character of the people, as it was making a common cause with them in the defence of our common country.

The bill was then read a first and second time, and committed *pro forma*.

The debate was resumed on the 20th, when Mr. Sheridan deprecated any discussion on the principle of the bill until the

question on the third reading, and the House went into committee ; on the 28rd, on the question being put that the bill should pass,

Colonel Crawford reminded the House that when he had a few weeks since supposed the possibility of the enemy landing 70,000 men near the metropolis, the supposition was asserted to be extravagant. He objected to the proposal of arming only the first class under the enrolment ; he thought all ought to be armed, and those who could not have muskets should be supplied with pikes. He then went into the deficiencies of the country as regarded the regular troops and fortifications ; he relied principally on volunteers from the militia to increase the regular army ; and thought it possible to fortify the coast from Yarmouth to the South Foreland ; secondly, that defences should be thrown up on the different roads from the coast to London, and that London itself should be fortified. He strongly urged the great danger of the

Capital, and the principal depôt for our military and naval stores being undefended ; and maintained that the loss of a single battle might draw after it the surrender of the metropolis and chief arsenals of the kingdom ; the effect of which would, both in a political and military point of view, be incalculable.

The Secretary at War then replied to Colonel Crawford. As to the uncertainty in all human affairs, old England had, in spite of that uncertainty, long borne up against all chances, and probably would continue so to do. He was decidedly averse to fortifying London. He thought, with such a fleet and army as we now possessed, it would be disgraceful to think of that measure ; it would be time enough to throw up works when the enemy were at the mouths of our harbours ; whether honourable gentlemen were satisfied or not with our preparations, he was convinced that the enemy were satisfied.

Mr. Pitt detailed what had been done by

the late and present ministry. They had also considered the defence of the different detached positions, such as Newcastle, the mouth of the Humber, &c., and of our principal ports and arsenals. Although he considered success certain, yet he agreed with Colonel Crawford that in order that the victory should be purchased with as small a loss of lives as possible, fortifications were very advisable. He strongly enforced the propriety not only of strengthening the metropolis, or at least, the arsenals in its vicinity, but fortifying the principal headlands of the coast, in order to render landing by the enemy more difficult. "It is in vain to say that you should not fortify London, because our ancestors did not fortify it, unless you can show that they were in the same situation that we are. We might as well be told that because our ancestors fought with arrows and lances, we ought to use them also, and consider shields and corslets as affording a secure defence against musketry and artillery. If the fortification of the capital can

add to the security of the country, I think it ought to be done. If, by the creation of such works as I am recommending, you can delay the progress of the enemy three days, it may make the difference between the safety and the destruction of the capital. It will not, I admit, make a difference between the conquest and independence of the country, for that will not depend upon one, or upon ten battles; but it makes the difference between the loss of thousands of lives, with misery, havoc, and desolation spread over the country, on the one hand, or the confounding the efforts and chastising the insolence of the enemy on the other." After dwelling on the strength and spirit of the country in a strain of the most animated eloquence, he concluded by giving it as his opinion, that the fate of the invasion, if attempted, would lay a firm foundation of eternal glory, happiness, and independence of the country; that the wreck of the conquered and fugitive army would shake the tyrant's usurped throne, and revive the spirits of the other nations of Europe,

and teach them to re-assert their rank and their independence.

The bill was then passed ; and on the 25th was brought up to the Lords, and at once went through the different stages with scarcely any opposition.

“The general enthusiasm of our population rendered the levy *en masse* bill a dead letter, for a far larger number of volunteers started forward into arms, than would have been the number of the compulsory recruits whom the bill enabled the Government to raise.”*

On the 10th of August, 1803, Mr. Sheridan brought forward his motion of thanks to the Volunteers of the United Kingdom. Whatever differences of opinion there might be upon the volunteer system, there could be, he said, no difference as to the merit due to those who came forward with such alacrity and spirit when they were called upon. He then drew the attention of the Government

* Condensed from Parl. Hist. England, vol. xxxvi. p. 1624 ; Annual Register for 1803, pp. 195—9 ; and Alison, Hist. Europe.

to circumstances which prevented many enrolling themselves. First, it was not clearly understood whether volunteers might not be called into the levy *en masse*; secondly, the expense of their clothing deterred many.—His words, spoken fifty-seven years ago, are applicable to the present hour, on this point. “The plainer and cheaper the dress was, the better: the finery of the uniform was of no importance; but the stuff of which the wearer’s heart was made was the only serious consideration.”—Whether volunteers and militia were equal to the regulars he should not go into, yet they were the best constitutional force we had in this country. After a strong recommendation for all party feeling to be laid aside for the summer, he concluded by moving a vote of thanks.

The motion was seconded by General Gascoyne, who hoped it would be unanimously adopted. He thought now the regular army was so powerfully supported by the militia and 300,000 volunteers, we should remove the seat of war out of our own dominions,

and learn to threaten the threatener; and that we ought no longer to confine ourselves to defensive operations.

Mr. Windham denied ever having reflected on the spirit of the volunteer army, but had merely preferred another force, which he was of opinion could be turned to the service of the country more efficiently. He considered the administration a weak one, and courted popularity, and consulted more what the people of Lloyd's, the holders of omnium, and the merchants would say, than what was the real interests of the empire. He considered the volunteer service a mere refuge from the compulsory service; and therefore there was not much merit in entering into it. If he should speak as a volunteer, he should say, "For God's sake don't thank me merely for being a volunteer;" but when he had performed any meritorious service, then he should deserve thanks. He should prefer an armed peasantry, and recommended the regular force to be increased to the utmost possible extent, and that the auxiliary force

should be completely irregular, and consist of the armed population of the country.

The Secretary at War taunted Mr. Windham with preferring a regular army which had a much more imperfect training than the volunteers. In the last war, when Mr. Windham was Secretary at War, the public heard none of his objections to the militia and volunteers. It was then his duty to have prepared those means of defence as in his judgment appeared best.

Mr. Wilberforce thought it premature to vote the thanks of the House to men for merely doing their duty as Englishmen, and that they ought to wait for solid services and more splendid achievements. He concluded by paying a compliment to Sir Sidney Smith for his gallant exploits at Acre, and by expressing an opinion that the country was equal to the situation it was placed in, and would finally triumph over its difficulties.

Colonel Crawford repeated the argument as to its being time enough to vote thanks to the volunteers, when they had

repelled an invasion with which the country was threatened, and agreed with Mr. Windham in preferring the people being raised *en masse*, and acting as an irregular force, to our volunteers in the way they were trained and disciplined.

Lord Hawkesbury maintained that after the treaty of Campo Formio in 1797, the country was in greater danger of invasion than at present; but cordially approved of the vote, as he thought it would be an encouragement to future exertion.

Mr. Sheridan made a very brilliant reply to the arguments against his motion, which he had supposed would have passed unanimously, and without much discussion; and animadverted with the utmost severity on the tendency of the speeches which had been so often delivered in that House by Mr. Windham and his friends.

Colonel Crawford having explained, Mr. Sheridan's motion was agreed to without a dissentient vote.*

* Condensed from the report in *Annual Register*, for 1803, pp. 208, 209.

On the 9th of December 1804, the Secretary at War (Mr. Bragge) brought forward the army estimates before the House of Commons. The debate that followed is not only of national importance, as regards the period in which it occurred, but with reference to the present. The Right Honourable Gentleman commenced with a candid, but startling announcement, that "the little account" he then presented was not the only one that he should require payment of during the year.

The number of men to be voted for was, exclusive of 22,887 for India, 278,149 ; the total expense of which, he estimated at £10,904,755. The volunteer corps he estimated at £730,000, besides an increased expense of the general staff, the volunteers of Ireland (numbering 70,000) the barrack department, &c.

Mr. Windham made a speech, which for pungency, if not brilliancy, reads as fresh as if it were spoken during the few first days of the session just commenced (1860); his

opinion of ministers he expressed, by comparing the faults of women, as contrasted with the opposite sex.

“ Men have many faults,
Poor women have but two ;
There's nothing right they say,
There's nothing good they do.”

He sharply attacked the ministry, who, after declaring that none but ‘ Nature’s fools’ could have supposed the peace of Amiens would have been durable, took no precaution for the defence of the country. Instead of which, they immediately began to reduce the army, and dismantled the navy ; they sold off the gun-boats at the price of the old iron in them, refused men at five guineas bounty, that they would be now glad to get at fifty, and discharged others that they could not now get at all!!! The population of the country was fifteen millions ; its financial powers almost unlimited. There was nothing the country was not willing to do in the way of service, nor any sum it was not content to pay, when at length ministers did

make a call upon the country, it came forward with an alacrity for which they were unprepared. The national feeling rose so fast upon them, that they were alarmed; they no sooner began to sink their well, than the water began pouring in upon them. The creation of the volunteer army might cost Government one million, and it cost the nation two more from individual contributions. Thus a force was collected which was imposing in the sound. 500,000 men in arms appeared a formidable host; but a very small portion were regular troops, a larger portion were militia, another considerable portion was the newly formed army of reserve, and by far the most numerous portion was the levy *en masse*, moulded into the form of volunteer corps. As for the 400,000 volunteers, he could not pretend to speak slightingly of them, containing as they did a great proportion of the zeal, patriotism, and spirit of the country; yet although not absolutely useless, they were not at all fit for the services to which they were destined. The

attempt was to brigade them, and make them regular soldiers, which he considered utterly impracticable. It was not in the nature of things that persons who were obliged to support themselves and their families by the exercise of their professions, could acquire sufficient expertness to equal regular soldiers, or become fit to be put in a line with them—it would be like putting frigates and sloops in the line of battle with three-deckers. He himself was an advocate for a very great volunteer force, but he did not dream of making regular soldiers of them. He also thought the Government had been culpably remiss in not erecting such works and fortifications as would obstruct the enemy either in their landing or in their march on the metropolis; and strongly recommended martello towers for the defence of the coast. He thought that the views of this country should not be directed merely in its own defence, but that it should possess a disposable force with which it might annoy its enemies. For this object they should make the profession of the sol-

dier as attractive as possible, they should change the period of service from life to that of a term of years."

The above is a meagre outline of a speech, which if read at length in the parliamentary debates of the day, would be thought to convey truths and suggestions which are as applicable to recent administrations as they were to that to which they were applied. Perhaps of all dull pupils governments are the slowest; repeated miscarriages, and with them "hard floggings" (for there are always to be found Windhams and Roebucks) have no effect on the official mind, until half a century has elapsed. Perhaps we may yet see the wisdom and policy of rendering "the profession of the soldier as attractive as possible," instead of making it a service of legalized torture, and the last resource of the idle, the profligate, and the unsuccessful of all other callings.

But we are keeping Mr. Secretary Yorke on his legs. He answers Mr. Windham, but not his arguments; some of his figures

may be quoted. The army had been raised from 60,000 to nearly 120,000 men. The militia were in excellent order and numbered 70,000 in England and 14,000 in Scotland. The volunteers amounted to 380,000,* of whom 340,000 were infantry, and were disciplined almost as well as it was possible for any equal number of men to be in the same time.

Mr. Pitt made an admirable speech:—The regular army would, he said, always be the rallying point of national defence; but with the benefit of their example and of their instruction, he was convinced that other descriptions of force could be brought forward with great advantage. He wished to see the volunteer forces of the country brought to the utmost possible pitch of perfection, in order that the regular army might be used to its full extent in assailing the enemy wherever they were vulnerable, and thus contribute to the deliverance of Europe from the tyranny and oppression under which it

* There were also 70,000 in Ireland, making with the sea-fencibles (25,000) about 475,000.

now groans. He approved of the volunteer system, and would have wished it to be carried to a much greater extent in the counties bordering upon the sea coast, in order that the enemy might be repulsed at the moment of his landing, and not allowed to get a footing in this country. *He thought the volunteer system capable of being made a permanent solid system of defence, and a great source of national energy,* and then proceeded to make suggestions for the improvements in the system.

Lord Castlereagh defended the government, and went into the statistics of the regular and irregular forces. He stated the number of ships in the navy amounted to 400, and an armed flotilla of small craft to the amount of 800 could be speedily added. He felt it necessary that the volunteer force should arrive at the highest perfection, for even if peace should be restored, it could only be preserved upon a basis of strong internal strength which would put the question of invasion for ever at rest. Our enemies would

shine like luminaries through the columns of the discussion : Mr. Secretary Yorke, whose short but shining career, and its harrowing catastrophe, can never be thought of without a pang of regret ; the highly gifted Sheridan,

“ who ruled like a wizard the world of the heart,”

—the comet of the House of Commons, dazzling all within the influence of its brilliant but eccentric orbit ; Lord Castlereagh and Whitbread, each powerful in his respective way, but totally different from each other ; Dr. Laurence, Mr. Addington, Mr. Canning, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, Mr. Windham, Mr. T. Grenville, Mr. (afterwards Sir Philip) Francis (whose claims to the disputed honour of the authorship of Junius perhaps are the highest of any), and Mr. Grey, all took part.

Mr. Pitt's speech, if not the most powerful, or the most striking, contains more matter which is not exclusively applicable to the time it was delivered than the others ; without attempting to follow the great orator, he began by noticing the calamitous destinies

of the present times, when a gigantic power threatened to disturb the world and desolate a great portion of Europe. It was the fate of this country to make resistance to that power, and he trusted it would be to its glory to resist it effectually. Whatever might be the original imperfections of the volunteer system, it could not now be dispensed with. The danger was pressing, and did not admit of time to change it, and therefore the only question was about its improvement. The idea of disbanding 400,000 men could hardly be entertained, and, therefore, it was only necessary to consider how they might be rendered as effective as possible. He thought ministers should have been more attentive to promote the regulation of the different volunteer corps. Although he thought far less had been done than ought to have been done in bringing the volunteers to a high state of discipline, yet he felt no fears respecting the result of an invasion. He thought it, however, necessary not only that the country should repel invasion, but

that they should repel it in such a manner as would make a lasting impression on Europe, and set a bright example to posterity. Our triumph should be signal and decisive, but it should be gained with as few sacrifices, with as little waste of British blood as possible. After dwelling on the importance of the volunteers receiving regular instruction, securing regular attendance at drill, and steadiness when at drill, he recommended them to go on permanent duty, and made some valuable suggestions for the permanent supply of the regular army, for the improvement of the fortifications, and the naval defence of the country.*

* Annual Register for 1805, p. 35.

CHAPTER XII.

Perils and panic-mongers—General Sir C. Napier's opinion—England ought to be at the mercy of no foreign power—French designs obvious—Being prepared is being secured—Cornhill Magazine on "Invasion Panics"—England *not* panic struck, but to a great extent undefended in a military point of view—Opinion of the Duke of Wellington of the effect of a contest with France—Necessity of the French Emperor to be at war with somebody—The army to him like the monster of Frankenstein—The Emperor a slave to his own slaves—Hostility of England in Charles X., Louis Philippe, and the Republic times—Prodigious advance of the French Naval Marine—Cherbourg—Popularity in France of a war with England—Sir Howard Douglas quoted—Mr. Roebuck—English and French naval strength compared—Present causes exist for national uneasiness—Enormous military force of the French—Mr. Kinglake's question and Lord J. Russell's answer—Extract from the Emperor's Speech to the French Chamber, 1857—English Army and Navy Estimates for 1860.

THERE are two very awkward but opposite classes, which form a very large proportion of our fellow-creatures—those who fear

everything, and those who fear nothing. The former "smell gunpowder" at the very sight near their dwellings of a life guardsman in his undress jacket, swinging jauntily his lithe cane, and imagine the invasion of their country must be near at hand, when probably their housemaid's heart or their pantry is the only object of attack; the other will not permit even the possibility of an invasion until a *Zouave* or a *Tirailleur Indigène* is found rushing into their domiciles.

The late General Sir Charles Napier was not one of the latter class, who refuse all other evidence but that of ocular demonstration. "For my part, I feel no disposition to sit down unresistingly at Oaklands till a French General of Brigade walks into my house, and cleans his boots by kicking me out of it. The loyalty, the good sense, the courage and the strength of England, if prepared and well directed, can cast invaders back into the sea that brought them here."*

* Lt.-Genl. Sir Chas. J. Napier, C.B. "*Letter on the Defence of England by Corps of Volunteers and Militia.*" (1852.)

Between these two classes, it is not very difficult to steer a middle course, and we are not without the means of arriving at a correct judgment, whether the present feeling that has actuated our nation, in re-constructing the volunteer system, has arisen from what has been called "an invasion panic," or from well grounded apprehensions.

One fact seems to us better than a thousand arguments on the subject; *if* the inviolability of the country and its integrity as a nation, are admitted to depend on the continuance of the amiability of one man, his temper, or the exigencies of his situation, which may control both his amiability and his temper; it seems to us that we ought to take good care of ourselves. Why are we to depend on any human creature? why are we to run the risk of having our Ambassador insulted as "the Great" Napoleon insulted Lord Whitworth? or as his nephew insulted the Austrian Ambassador barely twelve months ago? and why are we to run the chance immediately on that insult being

given, of having our coasts overrun with one hundred and fifty thousand men? Who has any doubt that had the same insult been levelled at our Ambassador instead of the Austrian, that the same number of French troops could have entered London at the same time and with the same marvellous ease as they effected their entrance into Milan?

Probably, as a writer we have already quoted has shewn, at the same time that our Ambassador received his parting insult from the Tuilleries, and landed on our shores, a French force might be landing on another part of them! If Englishmen could only realize the words so recently spoken to the Austrian Ambassador being addressed to their own national representative, whether they were mere words of passion or deliberate contumely, does not signify in the least; do they believe that the whole heart of England would not have been burning with indignation within twenty-four hours afterwards, and that we should have been looking around us to see

whether we were sufficiently prepared to meet the menaces that had been hurled against us ?

Of what use is history, if its teachings are disregarded ; better blot out all records of the past, and burn our chronicles than turn a deaf ear to their warnings. What has been the treatment of France towards England ever since she was a nation ? May it not be, and possibly *will* it not be ever the same ? She is a fair enemy, and lets us know what her designs are, and knowing them, we must be the most besotted idiots that ever crawled on the earth, if we did not do what we could to frustrate them.

“ Pshaw !” says your anti-panic man, “ what’s all this fuss about ; as for invasion, I don’t believe a word about it ; the French are not likely to visit us.” We answer our sceptical friend : “ We quite agree with you ; as long as we are prepared to meet the French, *should* they come, we do the very best thing to keep them away. Only, my dear Sir, keep your doors well bolted, your

windows well hung with bells, and let it be known that your revolver is always kept loaded by your bed-side, and we will engage that neither housebreaker nor burglar will ever disturb the serenity of your own or your spouse's slumbers. But discard your protections, keep your door on the latch, and your windows unfastened, and boast to your neighbours that they are so, for 'the country was never in so quiet a state as the present,' and depend upon it, your cash-box, silver forks and spoons, are in imminent jeopardy."

England can never be so secure from invasion as when she makes up her mind it *will* happen, and prepares for it accordingly.

After the greater part of the foregoing pages had been written, a contribution appeared in the "Cornhill Magazine" for January, 1860, entitled "Invasion Panics," in which the writer makes the following remarks: "The insular position of England, her lofty cliffs, her stormy seas, her winter fogs, fortify her with everlasting fortifications, as no other European power is fortified.

She is rich, she is populous, she contains, within herself an abundance of coal, iron, timber, and almost all other munitions of war; railways intersect and encircle her on all sides; in patriotism, in loyalty, in manliness, in intelligence, her sons yield to no other race of men. Blest with all these advantages, she ought of all the nations of Europe to be the last to fear, the readiest to repel invasion; yet, strange to say, *of all the nations of Europe, England appears to apprehend invasion most!*"

There is nothing like making an assertion boldly; however destitute of foundation it may be, provided your tone is loud, and your manner defiant, nineteen people out of twenty take it for granted that what you assert is past all controversy; the truth does not lie in what you say, but in the manner of your saying it.

Now, we would ask the writer of this paper what proof has he that "England appears to apprehend invasion most?" What are the facts—during the ten years that

elapsed between 1798 (when the volunteer corps really assumed any thing like importance) and 1808 (when they were disbanded), some "apprehensions" might have existed—and with very good reason; but what preparations were made "to repel invasions" in the half century that followed, until the present period, when there does appear something like a national demonstration on the subject, but as yet by no means a universal one.

No one can suspect "the iron Duke," who, in his seventy-seventh year was ready again to mount his charger, and head our troops, at the sound of danger, of old-womanish fears, and yet, if his testimony is worth anything at all, it clearly shows this, that while France has been strengthening herself on every point, as an assailing power, we have in the same proportion lessened our defensive power; that we have been exposed at a hundred different points of our coast to attack, without any adequate means of defence; and during forty-five years of peace

have rather depended on the generosity of our adversaries than on our own strength to defend ourselves. We ask, is this a position worthy of England? is it of any independent nation? and is it worthy of the greatest of nations to be at the mercy of any foreign power for subsistence—least of all at the mercy of her sworn hereditary foe?

“But,” says the Cornhill contributor, with refreshing candour, “if, in the year 1860, we have no means of discovering why millions of strong, brave, well-armed Englishmen should be so moved at the prospect of a possible attack from twenty or thirty thousand French, we have recently been placed in possession of the means of ascertaining why, some sixty years ago, this powerful nation *was afflicted with a similar fit of timidity.*”

Assertion again!—but we only wish, instead of denying it, we could confirm it. We should be extremely grateful to be informed *where* the “millions of strong, brave,

well-armed Englishmen" are to be met with; we will cheerfully concede the number, the strength too (although as regards the volunteers he causes us some misgivings on that essential), the bravery also, but "the well-armed" millions, we fear, exist only in his own imagination. Scarcely above 30,000 *effective* regular troops* were recently proved to be all the country could depend upon for its protection, in addition to the militia force, making together 90,000 or perhaps 100,000 efficient men. What then remains?—the Volunteer Rifle Corps, many of whom are now in their "goose-step," and probably do not muster altogether eighty thousand effective men.

Sir Charles Napier, writing eight years since, seemed to consider the feeling of the public a surer indication of what was about to happen than the proceedings of a ministry. "The public voice tells you that there is no time to be lost. Ministers are going at the pace of a tortoise; while the French

* This number has since been nearly quadrupled.

are rushing on with the fiery speed of an express train.”*

We are now however to consider the question whether the possibility results from mere panic or a well-grounded apprehension from facts that under no circumstances admit of any misapprehension.

We are at peace with the world—France included—and yet not a man, woman, or child in these islands doubts that if we stand any chance of a descent upon our coasts, it is from France alone. Let us then examine the grounds of that belief. In the first place, it is not a new fancy, but one of very old date.

Six years after the camp at Boulogne was broken up, the Duke of Wellington, in a letter which he addressed to the late Earl of Liverpool on the 23rd of March, 1811, says, “From what I have seen of the objects of the French government, and the sacrifices they make to accomplish them, I have no doubt if the

* Lieut.-General Sir Charles Napier, Letter on the Defence of England, &c.

British army were for any reason to withdraw from the Peninsula, and the French government were relieved from the pressure of military operations on the Continent, *they would incur all risks to land an army in his Majesty's dominions.* Then indeed would commence an expensive contest ; then would his Majesty's subjects discover what are the miseries of war, of which, by the blessing of God, they have hitherto had no knowledge ; *and the cultivation, the beauty, and the prosperity of the country, and the virtues and happiness of its inhabitants would be destroyed,* WHATEVER MIGHT BE THE RESULT OF THE MILITARY OPERATIONS. God forbid that I should be a witness, much less an actor in the scene ; and I only hope that the King's Government will consider well what I have above stated. To what are these facts to be attributed ? *Certainly not to the inclination of the inhabitants of the country* to the enemy, but to the system of terror on which the French, and all under their authority, invariably act, and to which no power

in Europe has ever, or ever can have recourse."

Nearly fifty years have elapsed since that solemn warning was pronounced; and what has occurred since that time? An additional element of danger has arisen; "the system of terror" does not alone coerce the French nation. Since the battle of Waterloo has been fought they have had a blot on their national escutcheon—the humiliation of a defeat. It is felt as a daring insult on our part, as a national grievance on theirs, that a country should exist under God's heaven over which the tricolour has not floated triumphantly. France and her ruler believe in her destiny—and that is to avenge the humiliation of the past by a glorious future.

It has ever seemed to us that we have attached too much importance to what may be the real feelings of the present ruler of the French;—granted, and we are quite willing to take for granted that he is our firm, fast friend and sincere ally:—Will he, we ask,

give up his empire for the sake of continuing our alliance?

Let us remember the significant words of his mighty uncle, which we have before quoted; put them into his mouth and we shall find what the extent of his individual power will be. "The world believe me the enemy of peace; but I must fulfil my destiny. *I am forced to combat and conquer in order to preserve*; you must accomplish something every three months in order to captivate the French people; *with them, whoever ceases to advance is lost.*"*

Like Frankenstein, the Emperor of the French has created a monster—a breathing, living giant of half a million of men—power, with passions, interests, necessities, wants, appetites, wills, inclinations, that not only require to be satisfied, fed, gratified, and indulged, but to be amused and kept in good humour, with the prospect of glory and plunder. The invasion of England—the sack of London—has been the bait that has

* De Stael, *Dix ans d' Exil*, 16.

been constantly kept dangling over the eyes of this monster-power; and when it finds itself cheated of its prey, defrauded of its reward, must not the condition of the arch-deceiver resemble that of the fabled Frankenstein?—the very slave of the slave he had created. That slave to whom he had given such capacious and unlimited power for doing mischief, without moral feeling or intelligence to restrain it, and which, when he failed of giving it any other object, would turn upon its creator?

The same idea has been better expressed by a writer we have before quoted: "Though apparently a despot, he (Louis Napoleon) is as much the slave of the public opinion of the people he governs as the ruler of the freest State, and he is absolutely powerless to arrest the progress of his army. The peace empire of 1843 has become the war empire in 1859. Our conclusions must not be based on the interest or ambition of any individual ruler who may happen to be on the throne of France, but on what we know

and on what all history tells us of the feelings and aspirations of the great body of the people of France. The present Emperor may or may not be desirous of undertaking the task ; but the crown of France will certainly one day be offered to any man who can and will raise the standard against England.”*

In justice, however, to Louis Napoleon, we must remember, that the hostile front turned toward us by his people, did not originate from himself. The wounds inflicted by the successful arms of this country during the great war of the Peninsula are still festering in his nation’s heart, and have neither been forgiven nor forgotten.

As far back as the close of the reign of Charles X. it was the policy of the cabinet of the Tuilleries to court popularity by exciting hostility towards England. The expedition to Algiers was taken in boastful defiance of her. Her ambassador was treated with great rudeness by the French minister, and a treaty was negotiating with

* Quarterly Review, No. 211, p. 247.

the Continental powers to deprive Great Britain of her Hanoverian possessions, but the revolution of 1830 scattered these projects to the wind.*

We have already quoted the confident opinion of the Prince de Joinville, as to the hostile feelings which existed at that time against us, and how completely we were at the mercy of our foe, during the comparatively halcyon days of his father, Louis Philippe.

One of the very first acts of the Republican government, established on the downfall of that monarch, was the appointment of a Commission of fifteen of its most competent and experienced members, to enquire into the efficiency of the navy, with a view of increasing its aggressive power. During the continuance of the enquiry, which extended over a period of two years, the Commission with M. Dufaure as its President, visited all the naval ports of France, at

* "National Defences," by the author of the *Revelations of Russia*.

which and in Paris they held more than two hundred meetings, and after hearing an immense mass of evidence, and collecting all the information that could be obtained on the past and present state of the navy, the Commission arrived at the result of their investigation. At their sitting on the 22nd of January, 1858, the question was plainly and pointedly put by the President as follows: "*La France a une marine-pourquoi? à quoi la destine-t-elle.*" The answer given by M. Collas, one of the most active of the commissioners, betrays the basis of all their subsequent deliberations, "*Ce qu'il faut établir d'abord, c'est le nombre de vaisseaux que la France devra mettre en ligne, le jour que la guerre sera déclarée. Pour cela il y a une base certaine—l'adversaire es connu; il ne peut être question QUE DE L'ANGLE-TERRE.*"

On this candid admission the French government has since systematically and consistently proceeded; and we see no cause to

* Quarterly Review, No. 211, p. 248.

doubt but what its object was to contest our naval supremacy, for which purpose its own navy was to be reconstructed.

The labours of the Commission were concluded in November, 1851, and the greater part of the evidence was printed, but the report was not published, until an event which was to give a new face, not only to the French nation, but probably to the destinies of Europe—the *coup d'état* of the 2nd of December, placed the execution of the projects proposed for naval reform in those hands, which had the power, and very probably the inclination, to carry them out.

The substance of the recommendation of the Commission was, that the status of the French navy should be raised without delay, either by converting or building forty-five line-of-battle ships, of the first class, fitted with screw propellers, with engines of corresponding power. Sixty steam-vessels of the highest possible speed and efficiency, with twenty steam transports, each capable of conveying 1000 men, with the requisite

stores and provisions were also to be provided, in addition to the transports already existing. Another recommendation was a considerable enlargement of their dock-yards, and increased facilities for the building and repair of ships. The necessary funds were provided without delay, and the works proceeded with the vigour which has characterised all the public acts of the Emperor.

And what did England? Did *our* Admiralty Board awake from its lethargy, and release itself from the trammels of red tape that had so long and so hopelessly fettered its movements?—Did *our* Government appoint a Commission “of intelligent and experienced men” to find out the acknowledged defects of *our* naval system, and ascertain whether any and what remedy existed for them? Did England now awake to the fact that the most implacable and most formidable of her foes was arming himself against her, and take the hint so openly and so magnanimously afforded her—to put herself on her guard?—alas! she remained as she was. Not

until the Russian war had convinced her, was she conscious of the fact, through the frequently expressed opinions of her own naval officers, that the French ships were at least equal to her own—not only in the construction, but in the manning of them—she also found out that the French could send her portion of the fleet to the scene of action, even faster than, with all her long boasted naval superiority, she could do herself.

Humiliating as the lesson was to her national pride, that France was now not only the greatest military power but was able to cope with her who had so long and so scornfully “ruled the waves,” did she learn wisdom by it? The very first act after the war had ceased, and after a magnificent but idle parade at Spithead, was to dismantle her line-of-battle ships, draw her gun-boats on shore, and having collected crews with great difficulty and expense, and trained them into efficiency, she discharged them from their ships, in order when next they should

be wanted, she might have the same difficulty and the same expense to bring them together again !

The practical improvements visible in the operations of the French navy, during the Russian war, did not end with it; but the works in their factories and yards were carried on with greater activity than ever, so that their extent is equal if not superior to our own.

If the perfection of the great works at Cherbourg was the sole object of their extraordinary labours, the successful termination of those labours in that unrivalled arsenal would have been a sufficient reward; but immense works besides have occupied them, at Brest, L'Orient, Rochefort, Indret, and at every other station of the French navy.*

The extensive additions recommended by the Commission, have, under the auspices of the Emperor, been not only completed, but have been exceeded. The present actual

* Quarterly Review, No. 211, p. 250.

strength of the French navy has been given elsewhere; and it is known that still more gigantic augmentations are in progress. From fifty-five to sixty line-of-battle ships, from eighty to ninety-five first-class screw frigates, a large increase of steam transport, and a class of iron-plated vessels, which officers of both navies believe will be more than a match for the largest line-of-battle ships afloat.*

While these prodigious works are being rapidly effected, the organization and efficiency of the crews are objects of equally laborious attention;† so that the whole force will take but a short time to be made ready for immediate action when the time arrives. At present the naval power is sufficiently advanced, to tempt her to use a very different tone in her treatment of Foreign Powers. The question will naturally be asked, against

* Quarterly Review, No. 211, p. 250.

† See Parliamentary Report of Committee "to enquire into the Navy estimates from 1852 to 1858, and into the comparative states of the Navies of France and England."

whom are all these gigantic preparations made? What great power can France have to contend with at sea—if it be not England? Is it necessary, as the great naval power of that country undoubtedly is, for the protection of her commerce or colonies? No one believes it. "It may be the next war-cry will be the Rhine; but the best and surest card the French Government now have to play is vengeance on England. Let them ask for a loan of fifty or a hundred millions sterling, and let it be accompanied by a hint that the plunder of London will more than suffice to repay it, and the list would be filled in four and twenty hours."*

It certainly must be regretted that John Bull—who, take him altogether, is a quiet, peaceable and well disposed fellow enough, content to eat, drink, and pay his way, without the slightest hunger for glory—should have such a restless, ambitious next door neighbour, who will pick up a quarrel with him, just for the glory of the thing, whether

* Quarterly Review, No. 211, p. 252.

Bull likes it or no. Bull would willingly let his unquiet neighbour indulge his fancy to the uttermost, provided he leaves *him* alone; but if his neighbour wont, why Bull knows how to take care of himself, he carries a heavy pair of fists about him, the weight of which his neighbour has had some very excellent opportunities of judging. Still, although Bull "is not at all afraid," he would rather not be bothered about it; he thinks with Uncle Toby, the world is wide enough for himself and the troublesome blue-bottle that will be always tickling his nose; he would much rather "have a deal" with his neighbour, and see if they can't drive a good trade together, by playing into each other's hands; and all this fighting takes money, and, what John knows to be the same thing by another name—time also.

What then is our danger? "It lies in the unity of despotic power, as compared with the uncertainties and vacillations of free institutions." Under a despotism like France, Russia, or Austria, things get to a head

much sooner than they can in England, where every pound that is spent has to be asked for—cavilled about, and perhaps grudgingly granted. Free institutions have their inconveniences, but we would rather put up with them than forego them.

It *may* be, that nothing so menacing is intended on the part of France as has been attributed to her. Have we any right to ask her *what she* means by her gigantic preparations?—certainly not; but we are at liberty to draw our own conclusions, and act accordingly.

“Viewing France as she really is, a great power, whose safety depends upon her military forces, we have no right to cavil at any measures, which the government of that country may adopt for its own security against its powerful continental neighbours. Her military preponderance is as essential to her safety as the maritime preponderance of Great Britain (an insular and colonial power) is indispensable to her’s. Neither should be jealous nor distrustful of the other,

in any legitimate use which either make of the powers with which nature has endowed them respectively, for providing effectually their own security." *

The following out-spoken opinion of the Emperor of the French—although spoken some time since, represents that which is entertained by a very large class, deservedly or undeservedly, we shall be better able to decide when we have seen what has to be said for him and his designs—has been given us by that very plain speaking gentleman, Mr. Roebuck: "To tell them that we were likely to continue at peace with a man by whom no sanctions were held sacred; to tell them there was no difference in the relations between France and this country, seemed to him like trying to impose on their credulity. The man who had forgotten all that was most sacred and binding on men, would only consult his own interests in matters relating to us, and we should

* Sir Howard Douglas, Introduction, p. xvi. "Naval Warfare with Steam."

de wisely, therefore, to be on our guard. We should speak with the utmost freedom, but still adhere to the rule—not to interfere.”

We believe, however, that the recent alteration in the tariff, for the admission of our manufactures, has done more to re-assure the public mind than all the arguments and reasons that could be urged in his favour. John Bull likes a “great fact,” and he has it.

There are still circumstances existing which must satisfy the most confident, that we ought not to relax our vigilance.

On a very recent debate (February 4, 1860) Mr. Kinglake put a question to the House of Commons in reference to the vast expenses which this country had to bear, from the fact that in the last phase of the French revolution a vast concentration of power had taken place, and that the Emperor of the French wielded the wide resources of France in a way that rendered it impossible to know what his intentions were, but from the great armaments he is now preparing. After allud-

ing to the prevalent general idea, that the peace of England was again about to be disturbed, and that schemes were on foot for altering territorial arrangements, he alluded to private information that he had received, that a levy of 140,000 men was to take place in France for what was called *remplacements*. The Emperor had also refused to give his *cong  * to some 40,000 men. He was assured, but it might be an exaggeration, that the Emperor would be, in the next spring, prepared to take the field with 600,000 men. Great preparations had also been urged forward for the supply of horse transports on the north coast of France. He remarked that the unfortunate battle of the dockyards was being carried on with unceasing pertinacity, while the Member for Rochdale (Mr. Cobden) was carrying on a supposed friendly intercourse with the Emperor.

Lord John Russell, in answer to the statement that 600,000 men were to be in readiness for the field in the spring, said there was nothing to corroborate it. A great

number of men might be called on to serve in the French army by conscription, and a general conscription takes place in every year. France, he said, was desirous that there should not be any renewal of the war. Without venturing on prediction, he might say that the aspect of affairs was favourable; nor was there any reason to suppose that France was making the military preparations referred to. With regard to the naval arsenals in France and the great activity prevailing in them, we all know that a great change has taken place in the character of naval warfare. Both England and France have endeavoured to be strong at sea, not with a view to any rivalry, but from a belief that each nation ought to maintain its ancient character; and he could not say that the naval preparations ought to be a matter of jealousy to us. If the two nations agreed that there should be no such preparations, and no strong navy, we might expect France to follow our course in that respect; but while France determines to make herself

strong at sea, and we like to have a strong navy also, he did not think it to be a reason why the two nations should have any dispute with each other. (Cheers.)

In giving this, "the latest intelligence," on this important subject, it is difficult to say whether the speech of Mr. Kinglake, or the answer to it, is the most likely to create uneasiness in the public mind.

In respect to the allusion made by Mr. Kinglake to the power of France bringing into the field the almost incredible force of 600,000 men, we have the following corroboration in the speech of the Emperor, on the opening of the French Chamber for the Session of 1857 :

"The budgets for war and marine have been reduced within just limits, so as to keep up the *cadres*, to respect the grades so gloriously gained, and to maintain a military force worthy of the country. It is with this thought that the annual contingent has been fixed at 100,000 men. This number is 20,000 above that of ordinary levies in time

of peace; but, according to the system I have adopted, and to which I attach great importance, about two-thirds of these conscripts will remain but two years in the ranks, and will then form a reserve, which will furnish to the country at the first appearance of danger, an army of 600,000 exercised men."

We have, therefore, another "great fact" for our national digestion, that France can at any time, either for offensive or defensive purposes, and quite independently of her maritime power, bring to the field a force of 600,000 highly organized, disciplined men.

It only remains, therefore, to be seen what force England has to meet it, should she ever be in the disagreeable position of having to do so.

The army estimates for this year (1860) amount to £14,842,275, being an increase of nearly two millions on the previous year. Upwards of three quarters of a million (£775,162) of this sum is for increased pay and allowances; and a further sum of

£200,000 is for wages of artificers; and another million is taken up by the Ordnance for "warlike stores of sea and land." Another increase of £300,000, in the charge for "purchase and repair of small arms," may probably be attributed to the introduction of the Enfield rifle in the place of the old musket.

The above figures demonstrate in the manner most intelligible to John Bull—by a direct reference to his pocket—the efforts which are being made by his Government in order that he may hold his own, notwithstanding what other nations may be doing to prevent him. Altogether £2,542,196 will be expended in increasing the number of our force, and in the improvements of the arms they carry.

A sum of fifteen millions being thus absorbed, we shall see it is through the altered character of the science of war. Instead of being mere machines, the soldier will have now to be a skilled workman; not only sufficiently well taught himself to use the

improved weapon placed in his hands, but to use it successfully against the enemy they will be opposed to, an enemy equally well educated.

Besides therefore the superior character of the force, John has (what he very reasonably likes to see) "something for his money," in the substantial force of an additional 7000 men to the number of the preceding year. Allowing for a considerable number of the militia that has been disembodied, we shall have an army of 143,369 men of all ranks; 92,490 upon the East India establishment; the total force, independent of militia, volunteers, and marines, will be this year 235,852. Enormous as the number represented by these figures is, it is subject to a tremendous diminution when the troops required for colonial service are deducted from it; and the residue will be found out of all proportion to the armies of the other great Powers with whom it may be our destiny to come in contact.

We have now to consider what the actual

naval strength of this country is at the present moment. On the 14th of February, 1860, Lord Clarence Paget moved the navy estimates. Commencing with a truism, that it was absolutely necessary for a country with such an extended territory and such an immense commerce to maintain a considerable number of ships, and that, supposing every other country should disarm, we should still be under the necessity of keeping up a large navy. The navy was now a new creation,—all nations had started fair, and it behoved us, therefore, to make efforts to restore our superiority. As to the navies which other nations possessed, he read a list of the French navy, which had 34 ships-of-the-line afloat and 5 building, 34 frigates afloat and 13 building, 5 iron-cased ships building, 17 corvettes afloat and 3 building, besides gunboats and small vessels, making in all 244 steamships; and most of those building might be launched in a few months. Russia had 9 steamships of the line afloat and 9 building, 18 steam frigates afloat and

3 building, 10 steam corvettes afloat and 11 building, and a number of smaller vessels, making 187 steamships afloat and 48 building—a total of 235 vessels. Unlike ourselves, both France and Russia could call out men to man their navies in a few weeks. He then stated the number of the steam-vessels we had in commission on the 1st of December last (excluding sailing vessels) at 244, of which number the force at home and in the Mediterranean consisted of 27 line-of-battle ships, 14 frigates and corvettes, and 29 sloops and gunboats, in addition to blockships, the number afloat and building, and the number he expected would be launched before the end of the year, including 10 line-of-battle ships and 12 frigates.

Lord Clarence then stated that it was proposed to build 39,934 tons during the ensuing financial year, besides converting 4 line-of-battle ships and 4 frigates. He claimed credit for effecting a real reduction in the vote for naval stores, etc., in the yards, without prejudice to the public service. In

conclusion, he said it was with extreme pain he was instrumental in asking for such large sums of money, but it was the wish of the nation that our navy should be maintained in sufficient force; and he referred to the suggestion of Mr. Cobden, that where the French had two ships we should have three. The Government felt bound, therefore, to continue their exertions to put our navy on a sound footing. At the same time, they did not think themselves under an obligation, if the state of Europe and the world should justify a reduction of our naval force, although the House of Commons granted the money, to expend it. He moved the first vote of 85,500 men and boys in the fleet and coastguard service, including 18,000 marines.

After some discussion the vote was agreed to, as well as a vote of £3,476,757 of wages for seamen and marines, and another of £1,458,087 for victuals for the same.*

* The above abstract is condensed from the "Times" report of the speech.

THE PERILS

CHAPTER XIII.

Cause of disproportion between British and foreign military forces—England has no conscription—She must keep pace with her neighbours—Peace best preserved by being prepared for war—Volunteer Corps indispensable in the absence of large standing forces—Regular troops mercenary ones—"The Cornhill Magazine" and the Rifle Corps—Garibaldi's vindication of the Volunteers—Is the discipline of the Regular force an advantage to them?—Napoleon's confidence in the National Guards—Testimony of the efficiency of the Volunteers in former days—A French witness called in corroboration—We must pay for our protection—Increase of the Navy and Army Estimates, and what we have got by it—Obligatory in all ranks to unite for the common safety—Every man liable to be called upon—Impolicy of breaking up the former Volunteer Corps—Public Schools and their sports—Robert Hall's eloquent address to the Volunteers—The end.

THE disproportion between the regular force of this country and that of the great

Continental Powers, however, must be ascribed to the simple fact that the latter have the means of compulsory enlistment; it is one of the boasts of this country that she has nothing of the kind. The only analogy our constitution acknowledges to a conscription is the *levée en masse*, through which the Sovereign may, in the event of an invasion, call upon every male subject capable of bearing arms to be enrolled. We have also seen, in an earlier part of our pages, that at the time of the great anticipated descent by Napoleon, the Crown actually exerted its prerogative, but that was rendered a dead-letter by the spontaneous enrolment of four hundred thousand volunteers.

What then is our position?—a large standing army and navy in times of peace would not only be repugnant to the feelings of the nation, but resented as a most hostile invasion of its pockets. Yet, if we see our opposite neighbours making huge preparations, and our sagacity fails us in attributing to them any other object than ourselves, we have no alternative but to keep a sharp look-

out ; and for every vessel built by our most friendly ally, build one just as good, and if we can, a better one ; for every improvement in military or naval tactics, to introduce as good an one ; when he brings forward a Miniè, to be ready with an Enfield ; and when he rifles his big guns, not to be behind him with a Whitworth or an Armstrong. It may be answered that this is the best possible way in the world for two nations, who ought to be on the terms of the closest alliance, to ruin each other. All that can be said, is, we must prefer a great, and all but insupportable expense, to being trampled upon by any foreign power.

Paradoxical as it may appear, it is undoubtedly the fact, that our best chance to keep in peace with all the world, is to be ready for war, with any quarter that threatens. " Whilist," says a very high military authority, " as a soldier, I would desire to give you some little insight into the above warlike proceedings, I am satisfied that in doing so I am performing the duty of a Christian, in contributing to the preser-

vation of peace. God forbid that you should ever be called upon to resist a foreign invader, but so long as there are forests of bayonets gleaming and bristling almost within sight of our shores, the country can only be secure of peace in being prepared for war." *

As we cannot compete with our continental neighbours, who can, as it were, by "putting on the screw," raise up an enormous force whenever it is required (as Napoleon did after his retreat from Moscow, and the loss of his magnificent army), we must see what we are to depend upon in the event of a great and sudden call on our resources.

THE VOLUNTEER RIFLE CORPS is the only possible answer we can give—if tens of thousands are required we have them in the handful of regular troops and militia—but if hundreds of thousands, then we can only have them by the voluntary rising of the

* Lieut.-Col. Jebb, *Manual for the Militia*; or, *Fighting made Easy*.

people themselves—that “cheap defence of nations,” to use Burke’s words, and which we believe, notwithstanding all the pooh-poohing, sneering, and condescending toleration of what are called the regular troops—the great mass of the country well regards as their appointed guardians and protectors, should the cry of danger ever resound on our coasts.

No one with a grain of sense ever imagined that volunteers are soldiers by inspiration, more than lines-men or militia-men ; but this we do believe of them, that from their higher patriotic spirit, and superior intelligence, they require infinitely less teaching. It may be thought that this is paying the rifle corps a compliment at the expense of the regular forces ; but it is a mere act of justice always to have this simple fact uppermost, that the volunteers is an unpaid service, and that he voluntarily lays down both time and money for the privilege of defending his country ; while, on the other hand, regular troops are to this extent mercenary ones—they are paid, just as members of other pro-

fessions or trades are paid for their services ; it is, literally, with the regular *point d'argent point de Suisse*.

Nothing can be further from our intention to insinuate that there is anything dishonourable in an officer or a private receiving pay for his services to his country—no service can be more honourable, no profession entitled to a greater degree of gratitude and respect than that of arms ; but if it be honourable to be a paid soldier, surely it is a hundred times as honourable to be an unpaid one !

Passing by the Temple Gardens in this present month of February, 1860, in a very heavy and continued fall of rain, we saw some two or three hundred gentlemen, members of the Inns of Court, patiently going through their drill—being bawled at by a non-commissioned officer, whom they obeyed as docilely as the veriest “awkward squad” gleaned from the cart-tails of the rural districts, or the metropolitan lanes and alleys. It was satisfactory to look at this demonstration of national feeling, and to feel beside

that there was not a county, and we might almost say a town or parish of importance in England, but what the same display was at that time being made.

By the alacrity with which all classes have joined the rifle corps, we establish two leading facts,—first that there are sufficient men to be found of patriotic feeling; and next that they are conscious that mere patriotism wont go for much in the hour of danger—although it will carry us a great way—but equipment, training and discipline are equally essential as patriotism, pluck, and national spirit.

It is, therefore, with feelings of indignation that we always receive anything like depreciation of the services of voluntary associations, and we cannot but think the illiberal opinions of the army of this country towards the rifle corps, as derogatory to themselves as it is to the subject of them.

Considerable attention was given to an article in the Cornhill Magazine for January 1860, which has been generally, but we trust erroneously, attributed to Sir John Bur-

goyne, and coming from so distinguished a source, it has won a larger share of attention than perhaps its intrinsic merits deserve.

The writer says :

“That our volunteers, who have nobly come forward without any prompting from Government, would be ready to devote their lives, as they are devoting their time and energies, to the country against invasion, no one who appreciates the English character will doubt ; but that such a heterogeneous body of men, if opposed to a highly trained and disciplined force of veteran soldiers, would be able to repel the attack of an enemy, *is now generally admitted to be a fallacy*, and it would be doing injustice to the intelligence and good sense of Englishmen to blink its truth, which must be obvious to every soldier who has had experience of actual warfare.”*

If it is a fallacy to suppose that such a “heterogeneous force” would be unable “to repel the attack of an enemy,” of course it follows, that the wisest thing they can do,

* Cornhill Magazine, art. “Our Volunteers,” vol. i. p. 78.

is to lay down, or hang up their rifles, doff their uniforms, and leave the country to defend itself, or wait until it is rich enough to pay for the raising and maintaining a regular force sufficient to repel that of any invading army that might be brought against it—in other words to keep in times of peace, in utter idleness, an immense armament of at least a quarter of a million of fighting men.

However moderate the expectations of the gallant general may be of what Englishmen would be under such circumstances, he is perfectly well aware of what stuff voluntary troops are made of, by the example of other nations.

“A confidence in the efficiency of an armed population to resist the invasion of their country by regular armies has been created by a reference to history,” (and it was no bad place to look for information on the subject); “and the examples of the United States, of the Tyrol, of Spain, and others,” (Italy, and her noble struggles are of course too far remote, or too insignificant to be

worth instancing), "have been triumphantly quoted; but an investigation of the circumstances of each case will show how greatly they all differ from such circumstances as would attend an attack upon England. In the cases cited, either the country was wild and mountainous, without communications and resources, the invading army small, or the contest greatly prolonged; rarely, if ever, has the invader been thoroughly checked *in his first progress*, but when forced to break into detachments and to act in small bodies, he has by a spirited and energetic population been harassed beyond his strength, and then *eventually* forced to abandon the attempt."

It might be perfectly fair, and yet not very generous, to meet the General on his own ground, "by reference to history," and quote the innumerable instances, where raw and undisciplined, and we might call them *extempore* troops, have soundly thrashed "a highly trained and disciplined force of veteran soldiers," when under the most animating of all earthly influences, the defence of their

country from an invading foe—and we repeat that as “the circumstances of each case will show” how such “a heterogeneous body” succeeded in other nations—only let those “circumstances” be “the case” of England, and she will want nothing more, not even the glorious example of the Americans, the Tyrolese, or the Spaniards, to stimulate *her* sons to the same glorious result.

We don't believe, ourselves, that regular troops possess a monopoly of the fine qualities that are necessary to make a good soldier—the pluck, the daring, steadiness under fire, and obedience to command. Whether Englishmen are volunteers or regulars, they will have those essentials; but in the event of a descent on their coasts, they will have, besides,—what is worth them all put together, the firm determination of disputing, inch by inch, the advance of an invading foe; on this they will be unanimous, we can't contemplate the possibility of any deficiency, and with it, if they have the necessary strength, and are not overpowered.

by numbers—they MUST conquer. There is hardly a people that would not fight to their last gasp on such an occasion, and if there be one—not their worst enemy can say it is the British.

We confess, however, that our *amour propre* may carry us too far—we acknowledge to the weakness of believing anything of an Englishman—and therefore turn with satisfaction to a safer authority, and one who, as far as we are concerned, must be considered free from national prejudice. When we say our authority is that of the most illustrious man of the present time, as a patriot and military leader, it is quite superfluous to mention the name of Garibaldi. In a letter addressed “to the Editor of the Court Journal,” the idol of the liberal cause in Italy thus expresses himself:—

“Fino, Jan. 15.

“Dear Sir,—I thank you for the confidence you have placed in me by asking my opinion of the English volunteer armament, and for the sympathy manifested by you for the cause of my country. You make a very correct comparison between English and Italian liberty, and I am perfectly of your opinion. When

the human family has arrived at that point of civilization to which progress will conduct it, it will not permit one of its members to remain in a state of servitude or degradation. As regards the volunteer force, I believe that England has done the best thing possible in availing herself of such an armament, and that this wise measure will render her territory impregnable against any foreign invasion. Would that my country could follow the example!

“Above all theory in the art of warfare one practical fact reigns triumphant—‘defeat the enemy’—a truth that will always triumph over all theories. The retreat of the most disciplined troops of Austria before the less disciplined Zouaves proves that a man may be a soldier without wearing a tight tunic or a tight cravat. The shepherds of Paulus Emilius, armed only with daggers, rushing on the Macedonian phalanx, those terrible conquerors of Asia; the clouds of French Voltigeurs of the Army of the Republic; and, lastly, the Bersaglièri and Zouaves at St. Martino, Magenta, Solferino, and Palestro, prove that masses are not alone useful in battle-fields, and that volunteers, Bersaglièri, and Zouaves need not learn how to fight in close order, like troops of the line. Discipline is, no doubt, the basis of the organization of all armaments, and without it war cannot be correctly carried on; but why should not volunteers, who have sworn not to abandon their standards during the danger of their country, have the same discipline as regular corps? Are patriotism and enthusiasm such despicious

able and heterogeneous sentiments as to destroy regularity in national troops? Certainly they are not despicable, since, in every war, a wise chief derives advantages from them in his harangues and his proclamations; and the First Napoleon, who was master of half Europe and the best army in the world, was defeated by the patriotism of the English, so-called 'shopkeepers,' of whom he appeared to have no great opinion.

"If Great Britain organizes her 200,000 volunteers, who will form the nucleus of a million of armed patriots in case of need; if she continues to train them (and that will not be difficult for the English), so that they become as disciplined as regular troops, we shall then see who will dare to invade the asylum of all and the protectress of the universe.

"I believe that the theory of great regularity of masses and lines is generally carried too far, and that the open order of battle is too much neglected, as it has become necessary through the perfection of fire-arms and through the obstacles that cultivation has accumulated at every step. If there is a country in Europe that has served for fields of battle, and continues to do so, that country is certainly and unfortunately Italy. How many places are there in Italy where a squadron formed in line, or a regiment in square, could fight? I believe that there are very few. On the other hand, places may be found in all directions which are adapted to the Bersaglièri. In

short, I think that several lines of Bersaglièri, sustained by a few masses of troops, would be the most convenient order of battle in our country and in many others; and that volunteers can be adapted for this end to the same kind of manœuvres as the troops of the line.

"I have read the valuable paper by Sir John Burgoyne on volunteers, and, although I do not know enough English, and have not had the time to form a thorough judgment upon it, it seems to me to be the work of an intelligent soldier who has seen many fields of battle. I do not, however, agree with him that 50,000 veterans will defeat 100,000 volunteers, if the latter have the discipline that all troops ought to have, and that they are, as may be imagined, animated by the love of their country. I do not yet know the way in which the English volunteers are organized, but I believe, however, that for volunteers, in all countries, the training of the Bersaglièri is the best. The lightness of their uniform, the open order that forms the basis of their manœuvring, without hindering them from acting in masses when the occasion presents itself, and, above all, the swiftness of their movements, make them the most perfect soldiers I have known. I wish that all the Italian army was composed of Bersaglièri; and I do not doubt that such an organization would also be easily attainable by English volunteers, English soldiers having obtained the reputation of intrepidity and coolness under fire.

"Honoured by your question, I have replied to you as a friend to a friend; and such, also, should be all Italians with the noble and generous English nation.

"Believe me yours faithfully,

"G. GARIBALDI."

We feel it would be presumption to add a word in confirmation or illustration of the views so temperately, and yet so convincingly expressed as the above; but would beg, in addition, to suggest two things to Sir John, when he next feels in a "ruminating" mood. First, we have the hardihood to doubt whether what he calls "military discipline and organization" are all that is wanting to make a man a good soldier; although we are free to admit it may make him a very good fighting machine. Secondly, we believe that the good soldier is more likely to be manufactured from materials unused to such discipline and organization; that the very absence of "regulation" orders, which are the dominating powers over the line, may be the very means of improving the condition of the soldier.

We have looked with pity and wonder at some raw recruit going through his earliest drill, his face either pallid with faintness, or purple from sanguineous congestion arising from the instrument of torture encircling his neck, and called a stock ; we have seen him in his tight "shell jacket," the idea of which was evidently purloined from a waistcoat formerly greatly in request at St. Lukes and Bethlehem hospitals, but recently, we are happy to say, discarded even there—and commiseratingly contemplated his pinioned arms, and encased legs in his merciless trowsers, which seemed to restrain every free action and movement of his body ; and wondered whether the time would ever arrive when a soldier would be considered as a human—not to say a rational—being ; for that would be expecting too much from the War Office ; and that he had lungs, limbs, and muscles, as any other human being, and that he might be taught, (or if he had already found out the way, allowed) to use them as Nature, and not as the last regimental order, prompted.

Our confidence, therefore, in the volunteer corps arises from the absence of those causes which the gallant General regrets—the domination of the War Office. As soon as the volunteer comes as completely under the controul of “regulation orders” as the regular troops, then we shall begin to quake for our country’s safety.

We don’t require any authorities for showing that the best home defence of a people is the people themselves. After Napoleon had broken up the camp of Boulogne, and changed the destination of “the Army of England” to Austria, he adopted for the protection of France what is strictly analogous to a volunteer force—the re-organization of “the National Guard,” which is in fact the same thing by a different name:

“My army is in the most brilliant condition; . . . but if I am tranquil for the moment—if to-day I have no wants, I must look to those which may arise from a war, possibly of two or three years’ duration. While I am engaged in the heart of Ger-

many the nation must be responsible to me for its own safety—must take under its own charge the strong places and magazines of the interior—and must repel, should it become necessary, any landing or attempt of the enemy upon our coasts.”*

In respect to the comparative merits of the volunteer and the regular troops, we may refer back to a former period of England's perils. “We are by no means prepared to say that there is so essential a difference between our volunteer and our regular force as to make us wish to see the former superseded in a great measure by the latter. Our volunteers are not merely an armed multitude; they have been embodied for a number of years and have attained in many respects to a very respectable state of discipline and knowledge. The money which has been bestowed upon them might perhaps have provided a more efficient and serviceable army, but this was a voluntary expenditure, and half the sum raised by compulsion would

* *Memoirs of the Comté Miot de Melito*, vol. ii. p. 278.

have been felt as a serious oppression. Our volunteers are too good to be parted with; and are certainly more fit for service than any other form of an armed population can possibly be.

“It is not being enlisted in a regular corps that can make a man a soldier—it is not receiving daily pay—nor appearing twice a day on the parade—nor being expert at the manual exercise, and familiar with the eighteen manœuvres. It is the experience of danger—it is a practical knowledge of the business of war—it is real service in the face of an enemy. All they (the regular troops) can boast of at present, then, is the exactness of parade discipline and superior expertness in those exercises, in which it is not disputed that volunteers may be made to rival them. When the necessity of fighting comes we have no doubt they will rapidly acquire all the other requisites of the military character; but the volunteers, if they are called into action, will acquire them also, and if they start with the same advantages as to

mere bodily discipline and activity they will probably acquire them as rapidly. A volunteer completely drilled, we take it, is fit for anything that a regular soldier is fit for, who has never seen service ; and if they are sent into the field together will ripen into a veteran as soon as his comrade. It does not appear to us that it will impair his martial ardour in any considerable degree that, after he has learned all he can learn out of actual service, he should work at a peaceable trade, instead of going about idle till the occasion for service arrives, or that he will fight the worse upon that occasion for having a home and a family to fight for.”*

We have also the evidence of one of themselves, that the best way of meeting the French, should they ever fulfil their repeated threat of paying us a hostile visit, would be by dividing our forces, reducing the warfare to partial engagements, so that the invading force would not possess the same superiority, which the rapidity of their manœuvres would confer in a general action.

* Edinburgh Review, vol. viii. p. 309 (1806).

“Every Englishman who will reflect on the greatness of the political, civil, and domestic blessings which he enjoys, and who will suffer himself to be convinced that he runs the risk of being deprived of them for ever if the French should be long stationary in England, will not hesitate to expose his life for the preservation of those inestimable blessings (which are greater than any other nation ever enjoyed) or to perish, rather than see the downfall and disgrace of his country, and of himself. The English would have it in their power to destroy the French, by the means of at least an equal degree of bravery, and great superiority of numbers; but this can only be effected by acting in separate bodies, by meeting the enemy at all points, without giving him time to form any settled and combined plan of general action.”*

While we have every confidence in the bravery and patriotic spirit of Britons, whatever may be the soil they plant their feet on,

* *Caractere des Armées dans la Guerre actuelle*, pp. 118, 114.

more especially if it be the soil where they first drew their breath; we must not shut our eyes on the real difficulties they have imposed on themselves, nor on the dangers to which they may be exposed. The following striking picture of the real evils of an invasion, even if it failed, was drawn in 1806, shortly after all immediate apprehensions had ceased of any renewal of Napoleon's projected attack.

“With every disposition to exalt the valour of Britons, and to augur well of their efforts in defence of the greatest blessing which any people can ever enjoy, we may be permitted to dread the event of a contest between courage and skill. Nor was the difference between the two ever so strongly marked as since the experience of the late campaign. It is no disrespect to our troops and their commander to question whether their native talents are sufficient to supply their want of experience and to wish that, until measures are taken to improve them in their art, there may be no trial of generalship

between them and the conductors of the late German* campaign. That the country could be ultimately conquered, we cannot for a moment allow ourselves to believe; but there are other evils attending an invasion, besides the greatest of all evils; there are injuries short of utter ruin which a nation may receive from it. We know nothing practically of war, we have heard of its effects, and read of battles at a great distance, but we knew it not from experience, and it is well we do not. Never was a country worse calculated for being the scene of military operations, for having the hazardous issue of war tried within its bounds, with its wealth, its crowded population, its multitudes of citizens and traders, its paper circulation, its public debt, its commercial credit, with the various factitious qualities of a nice and complicated system of most artificial society, and above all, without any experience whatever of a campaign on its own ground; how

* If for "German" we read "Italian," we shall see the applicability of the quotation.

frightful to contemplate the mischiefs which so unusual a convulsion must occasion, admitting it should end in the total defeat of the invader! It is clear that no wise man will desire to see such an experiment tried, and that however it may end, the attempt would of itself be an enormous evil.”*

Whether we choose to rank ourselves in either category of being “peril mongers” or “panic mongers,” we agree on one point, and that is the necessity of being at all times well prepared. This necessity involves expense; we cannot have our house and property insured without paying the insurance offices something to undertake the risk; we cannot insure our country, our individual homes and properties, from a more destructive peril—invasion—without paying for it. We find every year our estimates gradually increasing; every improvement that adds to our national security is a tax on our national

* An Enquiry into the State of the Nation, &c. pp. 128-130, 1806, Ridgway.

energies and resources. This is very unpleasant, but it is at the same time inevitable.

The amount levied on this country for the pay and maintenance of our seamen in 1859 was £4,300,000; this year it will be hard upon five millions, or an increase of £600,000. For this sum we have "money's worth" in an increase of 13,000 men on the strength of our establishment.

The prodigious increase in the cost of modern maritime warfare to what it was in the beginning of this century is clearly attributable to the introduction of steam, which has not only more than trebled the first cost of a ship, but has greatly inflamed its current expenses. Formerly, it was reckoned that a man-of-war cost one thousand pounds a gun, but such as we are now building cost at the rate of £4000 a gun. In 1805, immense as we have seen our naval force was, the enormous expense of fuel, skilled labour in the engineer's department, and the rapid wear and tear which the new method of propulsion creates, was unknown.

It would be beyond even the means

which this nation has at command for it to keep afloat the immense fleet which she did fifty or sixty years ago. Happily, the number is not so necessary as the effectiveness. The cost however is tremendous, added to which we have seen by a recent debate in the House of Lords (27th February, 1860) on the Naval Reserve, what another fearful addition to our burdens our safety imposes—we are positively obliged to offer large premiums to every man that is willing to enter the service, so large that he thinks it “almost too good to be true;” and the inducement is either not large enough, or too great to be accepted without suspicion.

Such being the increasing ratio of our naval estimates, we shall find that there is a corresponding increase in our army estimates—the money has however been well laid out—in the improvement of our artillery and the manufacture of the Enfield rifle, which may be regarded as the most vital element of our national defence.

It was stated in the “Times” of the 20th of February, that by the vast amount that

has been expended in improved artillery we shall be able to furnish all our field batteries and to arm all our ships and fortresses with rifled cannon.

According to the rate they are now being manufactured, we shall have some three thousand Armstrong guns by the end of the present year, with Enfield rifles enough for all capable of using them. The line, the embodied militia, the disembodied militia, the pensioners, and the Irish constabulary, and under certain restrictions, the Volunteer associations.

Not only have we weapons in profusion, but hands to use them. We may calculate that we can bring into the field 107,000 regular troops, without including the militia troops, and our riflemen are daily increasing in number and efficiency.

Although the force may not be one-fourth, at present, of the number that it mustered between the years 1798 and 1804, when 410,000 men were enrolled, of which 341,000 were English, we are to remember that a large number of that immense force were

enrolled to save themselves from the compulsory levy *en masse*. That is a power which the Sovereign always possesses in times of threatened danger; and every man capable of bearing arms should remember he may be obliged to carry them, and at perhaps the shortest possible notice, and at the greatest possible disadvantage and inconvenience.

We need not, however, appeal to mere personal considerations—our fellow-countrymen are influenced by higher motives. The “rifle movement” cannot be considered as a mere ebullition of national ardour, to die out when the apparent danger that threatened us—and perhaps does still threaten us—disappears, but it should be considered as the mere beginning of a permanent national institution.

Nothing could be more ill-judged than the breaking up of the immense force which was brought together at the commencement of this century, just as it was become efficient and disciplined. We hope that we shall not repent so great, and nearly so fatal, an error;

but we trust that the riflemen of 1860 will not only be as well disciplined, but that they will take rank as a permanent power.

Even should the clouds that hover about our shores disappear, and England and France become as firmly united as their interests would render it desirable—and the union would *then* be indissoluble—every man we boldly say, capable of using a weapon, ought not only to carry it, but know how to use it to the best advantage.

“Self-preservation,” is to the nation in the aggregate, as it is proverbially to the individual, “the first law of nature.” Every man feels bound to be able to take care of himself, and those of his family of whom he is the natural protector. Are we rating the duty of an Englishman too highly when we affirm that he ought also to be able to extend his protection to his country—next to his wife and children it should be his individual care—we say *next*, although, in point of fact, by defending his country he defends them.

Not only is it every man's duty, but his

privilege—and a great and noble privilege it is—to be enrolled amongst his country's defenders; it is also a personal benefit to himself. There cannot be a more invigorating pursuit to the body, or a more bracing one to the mind, than the training which military duties involve.

The *esprit du corps*—we are almost ashamed of the fact that we have no equivalent for this phrase in our language, for it would indicate that we wanted *the thing*—the obedience to a superior power, without servility, but as an act of duty; the quickness of eye, the agility of frame, the self-reliance, the capability of bearing fatigue, the open-air exercise, and the generous manly rivalry, must be all of the highest benefit to us as a people, as well as to each of us, who acquire them individually.

What, then, may we hope for?—not only that our Universities—and Cambridge we must remember set the noble example, but our public, our private schools, of any extent, will have each its rifle company. It is creditable to the manly character of our

youth at Eton and Rugby, and other public seminaries, that their sports are all of a manly character ; that cricket, foot-ball, and boating are actively cultivated, and to be proficient in them young men are allowably proud, and continue their exercise in after life. Nor do we wish to see them ever laid aside by English boys ; for, we believe, the openness and manliness of our nation's character depend more upon the nature of our sports and our capabilities for out-door amusement than is generally conceded. All we would ask of " Young England " is to be as much like " Old England " as it can be ; to preserve the honour, the bravery, tempered with humanity, and the love of country, that makes an Englishman, with all his national pride, his arrogance, and his inveterate prejudice, foremost among all nations.

In conclusion, we will address Riflemen of the present day, in a few glorious words spoken to the Volunteers on the 19th October, 1803, the day of the General Fast, of which we have already given some account ;* the

* Vide p. 249.

inspired tongue, and the lips "touched with fire" that uttered them, are now cold in the silence of the grave; but those words will live as long as the language, of which they form a part, can endure.

"Freedom, driven from every spot on the Continent, has always sought an asylum in a country which she has always chosen for her favourite abode; but she is pursued even here, and threatened with destruction. The inundation of lawless power, after covering the whole earth, threatens to follow us here; and we are most exactly, most critically placed, in the only aperture where it can be successfully repelled, in the Thermopylæ of the universe. As far as the interests of freedom are concerned, the most important by far of sublunary interests, you, my countrymen, stand in the capacity of the federal representatives of the human race; for with you it is to determine (under God) in what condition the latest posterity shall be born; their fortunes are entrusted to your care, and on your conduct at this moment depend the colour and complexion

of their destiny. If liberty, after being extinguished on the Continent, is suffered to expire here, whence is it ever to emerge, in the midst of that thick night that will invest it? It remains with you, then, to decide, whether that freedom, at whose voice the kingdoms of Europe awoke from the sleep of ages, to run a career of virtuous emulation in everything great and good; the freedom which dispelled the mists of superstition, and invited the nations to behold their God; whose magic touch kindled the rays of genius, the enthusiasm of poetry, and the flame of eloquence; the freedom which poured into our lap opulence and arts, and embellished life with innumerable institutions and improvements, till all became a theatre of wonders; it is for you to decide whether this freedom shall yet survive, or be covered with a funeral pall, and wrapt in eternal gloom. It is not necessary to await your determination. In the solicitude you feel to prove yourselves worthy of such a trust, every thought which is afflicting in warfare, every apprehension of danger must vanish

and you are impatient to mingle in the battle of the civilized world. Go, then, ye defenders of your country,* accompanied with every auspicious omen ; advance with alacrity into the field, where God himself musters the hosts to war. Religion is too much interested in your success not to lend you her aid ; she will shed over this enterprise her selectest influence. While you are engaged in the field, many will repair to the closet, many to the sanctuary ; the faithful of every name will employ that prayer which has power with God ; the feeble hands which are unequal to any other weapons, will grasp the sword of the Spirit ; and from myriads of humble, contrite hearts, the voice of intercession, supplication, and weeping, will mingle in its ascent to heaven with the shout of battle and the shock of arms.

“ While you have every thing to fear from the success of the enemy, you have every means of preventing that success, so that it is next to impossible for victory not to crown

* A company of volunteers attended public worship on this occasion.

your exertions. The extent of your resources, under God, is equal to the justice of your cause. But should Providence determine otherwise, should you fall in this struggle, should the nation fall, you will have the satisfaction (the purest allotted to man) of having performed your part; your names will be enrolled with the most illustrious dead, while posterity, to the end of time, as often as they revolve the events of this period (and they will incessantly revolve them) will turn to you a reverential eye, while they mourn over the freedom which is entombed in your sepulchre. I cannot but imagine the virtuous heroes, legislators, and patriots, of every age and country, are banding from their elevated seats to witness this contest, as if they were incapable till it be brought to a favourable issue, of enjoying their eternal repose. Enjoy that repose, illustrious immortals! Your mantle fell when you ascended; and thousands, inflamed with your spirit and impatient to tread in your steps, are ready "to swear by Him that sitteth upon the throne, and liveth

for ever and ever," they will protect freedom in her last asylum, and never desert that cause which you sustained by your labours and cemented by your blood. And thou, Sole Ruler among the children of men, to whom the shields of the earth belong, "gird on thy sword, most Mighty;" go forth with our hosts on the day of battle! Impart, in addition to their hereditary valour, that confidence of success which springs from thy presence! Pour into their hearts the spirit of departed heroes! Inspire them with thine own; and, while led by thine hand and fighting under thy banners, open thou their eyes to behold, in every valley and in every plain, what the prophet beheld by the same illumination—"chariots of fire and horses of fire!" "Then shall the strong man be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark; and they both shall burn together, and none shall quench them."*

* Robert Hall, "Sentiments Proper to the Present Crisis."

